

Proposal for the Structure of the LAUSD Portfolio and Defense

(draft 9-27-14)

In order to graduate, an LAUSD student must assemble a portfolio of work that demonstrates his or her success in living up to the LAUSD graduate profile. The student orally defends the portfolio before a panel.

The portfolio and the defense are two separate stages, each of which is assessed by its own rubric(s).

What is proposed here is a structure to guide the design of all LAUSD senior-year portfolio-defenses. The structure attempts to balance alignment to LAUSD's grad profile with room to express school-specific goals for graduates (especially needed for career pathway schools).

The Portfolio

For the portfolio, the student must present and reflect on work he or she has done that offers observable evidence of pathway student learning outcomes. Pathway outcomes that drive the portfolio should:

- Reflect a continuum of student learning across disciplines and grade-levels
- Align with key standards (CCSS; NGSS; C3; CTE; and CA Content Standards)
- Embody the four parts of the LAUSD graduate profile:
 - Efficacious
 - Adaptable
 - Worldly
 - Influential

These are the required elements of the portfolio:

- 1) Personal statement
- 2) Three artifacts of student work, already evaluated through validated rubrics:
 - a. One representing the humanities
 - b. One representing STEM
 - c. One representing an integrated project or performance task
- 3) Evidence of community advocacy (aligned to pathway outcomes)
- 4) Short reflection on each artifact that does the following:
 - briefly introduces and contextualizes where the work or excerpt of the work is coming from
 - analyzes the excerpt of work, explaining in detail what skills it exemplifies
 - reflects on the student's individual understanding of that skill, how she has grown in it, and what progress she still needs to make.

Here is an analysis of how these portfolio elements align to the LAUSD grad profile:

Efficacious – “Graduates are able to take responsibility for their own growth and development”

Measured by:

- the completeness of the portfolio itself
- the quality of reflections on work and growth

Adaptable – “Graduates are adept at navigating complex systems”

Measured by:

- quality of submitted academic student work: humanities, STEM, and school-specific outcome

Worldly – “Graduates are active locally while recognizing the interconnectedness with the global community”

Measured by:

- effort and rigor of student’s community advocacy

Influential – “Graduates are visionaries who inspire others”

Measured by:

- personal statement

The Defense

The portfolio and the defense are related but distinct. The portfolio is assembled, on paper or digitally, and can be viewed by an assessor anywhere, anytime. The defense is a live event before a panel of evaluators.

In the defense, the student argues that “I have used my education to grow my skills and prepare me for a career.” Student/school has some leeway in how to make this argument, but student must show evidence of both growth and career-readiness by **referencing at least two artifacts from the portfolio.**

The defense should complement, not supplement, what is already in the portfolio itself. This is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate his ability to design a coherent and engaging presentation, to confidently engage an audience for a sustained length of time, to speak extemporaneously, to listen and respond to questions. There should be room for the student to inject some creativity into the presentation. It is also an opportunity for the panel to ask a student to elaborate on what is in the portfolio.