



# Introduction to Portfolio-Defense

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Deeper Learning Coach

tiny.cc/Montebello



<http://teacher.justinwells.net/EnvisionLearning/portfolio-defense-Montebello>

**How did you know  
that you were  
ready to graduate?**



KNOW



Reflect



# Our Essential Question

- ▶ How do we **know** that our **students** are prepared to **succeed** in college, career, and life?



# Our Essential Question

▶ How do we  
**measure what our school  
stands for?**

# Our Learning Target

- ▶ I can describe what **portfolio-defense** is and how it supports **the goals of Linked Learning.**



**ENVISION**  
**LEARNING PARTNERS**

*Inspiring Results*







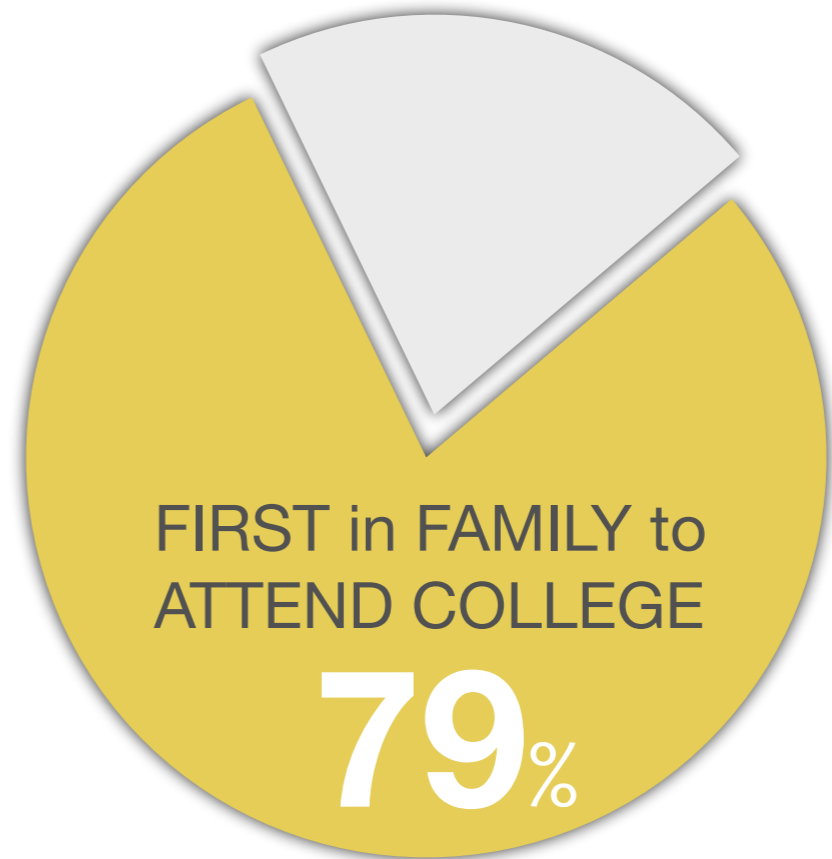
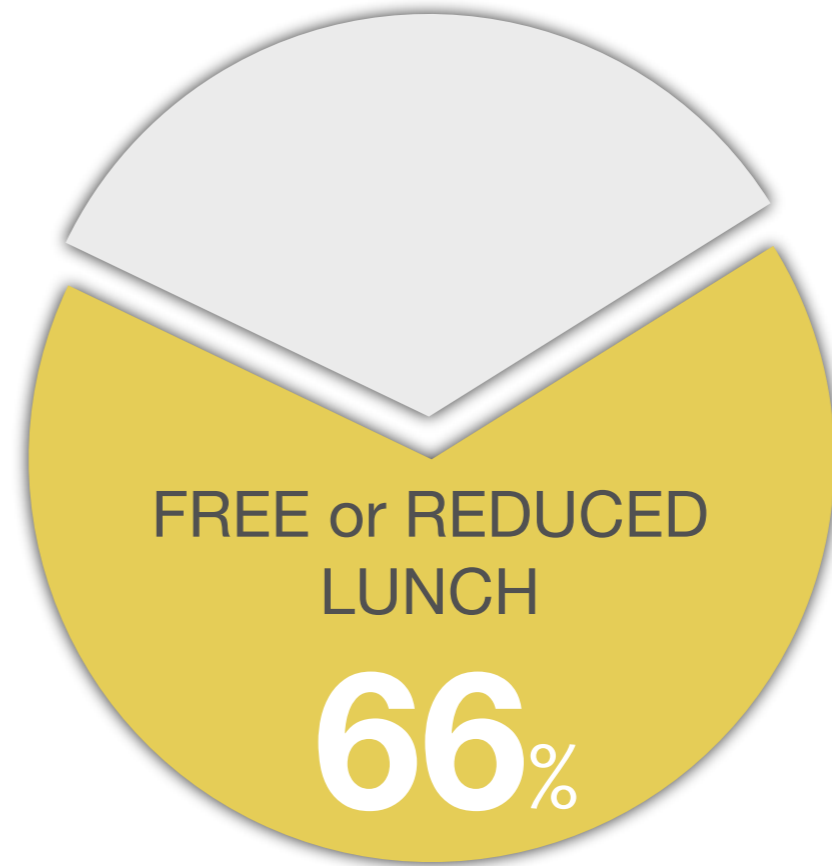
**ENVISION**  
**SCHOOLS**  
*Teaching Success*

**Envision Schools** transform the lives of students — especially those who will be the first in their family to attend college — by preparing them for success in college and in life.



# ENVISION SCHOOLS

*Teaching Success*



**100%**

meet the course requirements to attend  
a 4 year public college in California.

**>90%**

attend 2 or 4 year college.

**>70%**

attend a 4-year college.

**>90%**

re-enroll in their 2nd year of college.



**ENVISION**  
**SCHOOLS**  
*Teaching Success*



**ENVISION**  
**LEARNING PARTNERS**

*Inspiring Results*



**ENVISION**  
**SCHOOLS**  
*Teaching Success*

An Envision Graduate is a  
**Knower**, a **Doer**, and a **Reflector**.



Defense

The Final Results of Victory

hand meaning she was able to put around \$125,000 from her that impacted her campaign by being able to be seen or heard by the media"

and quote demonstrates how in election in 2010 she was able to raise huge amounts of her own money which other candidates are unable to do.



Rhetoric

effective communication, both written and verbal.

- about *how* you say something.

never

FORBIDDEN WORDS

Pathos:  
emotions of audience

- stuff

# ENVISION SCHOOLS

STUDENT GRADUATION DEFENSE PORTFOLIO

HIGHLIGHTS

Rhetorical Appeals

Logos:

**Share with a partner:**

What's the **value**?

What's the **challenge**?



KNOW



Reflect



# Our Session . . .

- What defines a performance assessment *system*
- Why our hopes for our students demand it
- How portfolio assessment & defenses of learning can get us there

Do



Know

Reflect



KNOW

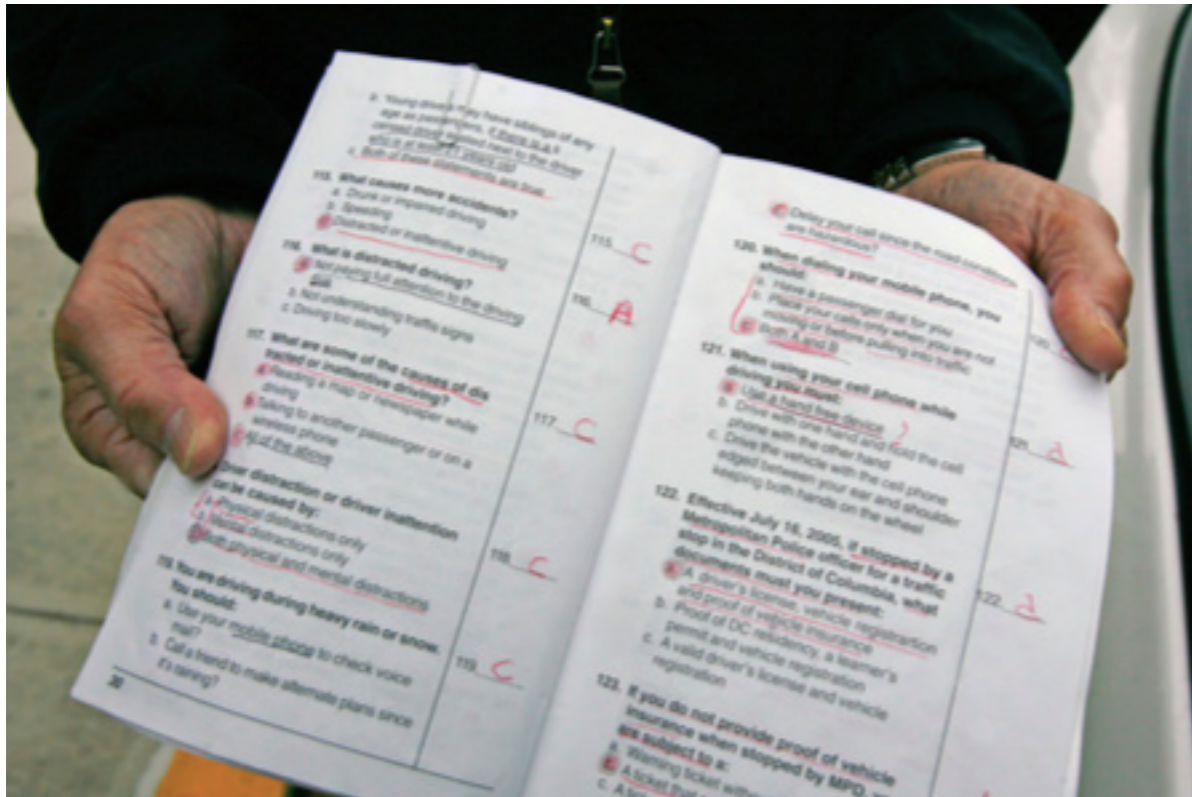
**What is  
performance assessment?**



What if the DMV issued a driver's license with a **written test only**?

- If the shoulder is wide enough to accommodate your vehicle
- If the vehicle ahead of you is turning left.
- Under no circumstances

# Permit Exam vs. Driver's Test



# performance assessment: a baseline definition

- product or performance
- application of targeted skill(s)

# Test of a true performance assessment . . .

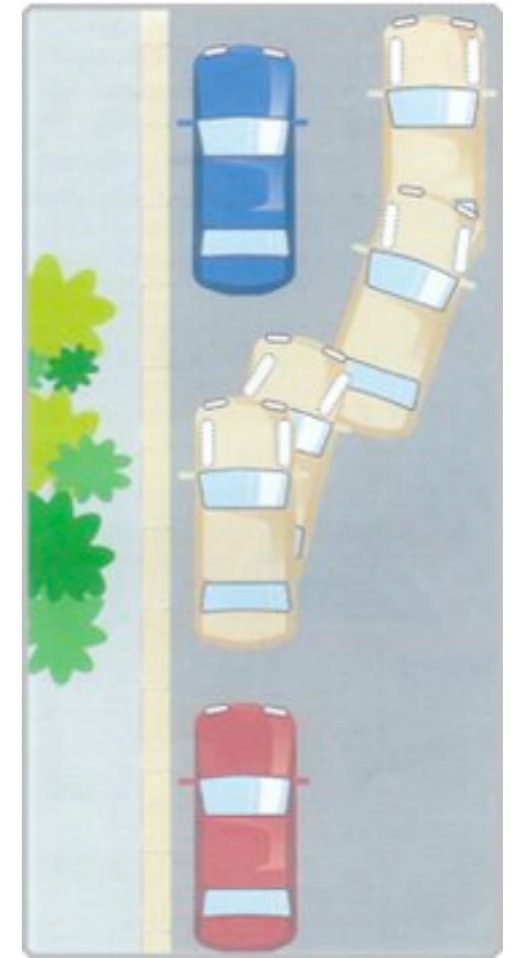
**before**



**during**



**after**





KNOW

**Why our hopes for our students demand  
performance assessment?**



# Senior Year at \_\_\_\_\_ High

1

Research

2

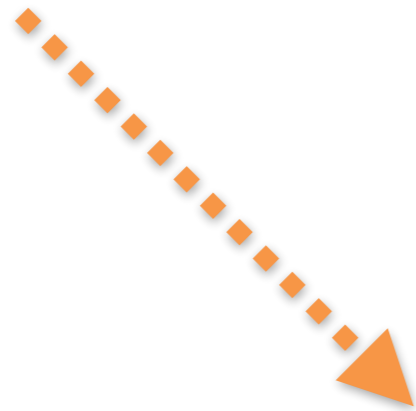
Argue

3

Serve

4

Defend



# Reflection

- PSA
- Prepared for college
- Growth
- Challenges



**Guess . . .**

**What are this school's  
pathway outcomes?**

# Health Professions High School



# HPHS: Pathway (PRIDE) Outcomes

- ✓ P: Powerfully prepared for college and career
- ✓ R: Responsible citizen
- ✓ I: Independent critical thinker
- ✓ D: Determined life long learner
- ✓ E: Excellent communicator

**show, don't tell**

**Now, consider your pathway  
outcomes . . .**

What's at least one thing you want  
your graduates to do that can only  
be measured  
through performance assessment?

Why?



KNOW

**How portfolio-defense  
can get us to our visions**





# THEORY OF ACTION

1

Define a **graduate profile**  
for the learner

2

Design a **performance assessment**  
that measures that graduate profile

3

Implement **pedagogies &  
school structures** that lead to success  
on that performance assessment

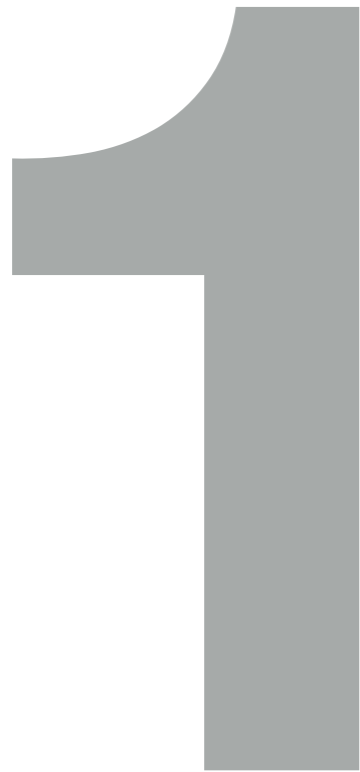


graduate profile

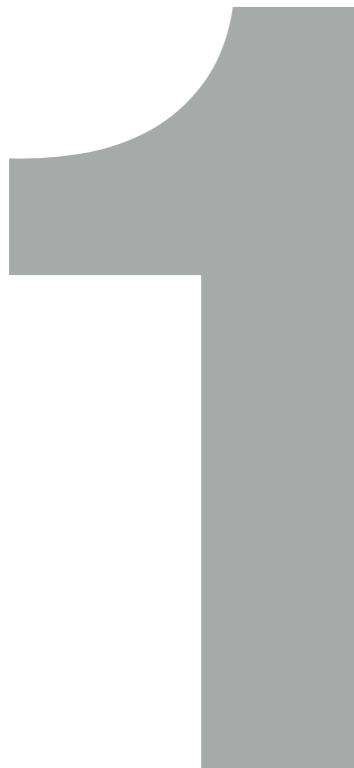
**pathway  
outcomes**

**CCSS**

**deeper  
learning skills**



**graduate profile**



**College Success Portfolio Overview**

**Our BIG Goal**

At Envision Schools we are focused on rigor. By rigor we don't mean more content. We mean complexity; the ability to think like an historian or mathematician, the ability to know and use the leadership skills necessary in college and life, and the ability to reflect about one's personal journey as a learner. In short, we are about students knowing, doing and reflecting.

**Profile of an Envision Schools Graduate**  
Envision Schools graduates are ready for success in college and future careers because they know, do and reflect.

Envision graduates **KNOW**. They:

- Master academic subjects which makes it possible to:
  - meet the University of California's A-G Requirements
  - pass the California High School Exit Exam
  - show proficiency on the California Standards Tests
  - perform successfully on college entrance exams

*Being put in a position to articulate a concept to an audience takes a greater comprehension than just learning the idea for yourself. By talking about the project, I deepened my own knowledge of the math we were learning.*  
- Envision Graduate

Envision graduates **DO**. They:

- Use core competencies required to perform the role of a college student: inquiry, analysis, research, and creative expression in core content areas
- Use 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership Skills: Communicate Powerfully, Think Critically, Collaborate Productively, and Complete Projects Effectively
- Participate in at least one Workplace Learning Experience in which they do real work and complete a project that not only benefits their workplace, but demonstrates their ability to use leadership skills as well as inquire, analyze, research, or express themselves creatively in the workplace


*As I began to draft this paper, it was clear I needed more information on specific areas, so as I wrote I also had to research more.*  
- Envision Graduate

Envision graduates **REFLECT**. They:

- Recognize and acknowledge growth, accomplishments and successes as well as areas of future growth and development
- Revise work to proficiency based on feedback from teachers and peers

*Before I was not so fond of revisions, but now I can't get enough of them. The reason behind this is because it's constantly showing that I grow continually everyday and that's something that I don't acknowledge too often.*  
- Envision Graduate

A cycle of knowing, doing, and reflecting exists at each level of the portfolio experience. Ultimately, students build towards becoming a balanced graduate, who knows their academic subjects, shows what they can do through their competencies and leadership skills, and reflects on their learning in order to deepen their knowledge and skills. Within each of the competencies, students also cycle through knowing (learning content), doing (applying), and reflecting as they bring their artifact to proficiency.



graduate profile

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

## Journey Through Life Skills

- ❖ **We plan together** (actively contribute, participate)
- ❖ **We encourage** (support all members)
- ❖ **We lead** (take action when needed)
- ❖ **We follow** (take direction when needed)
- ❖ **We use expertise** (use our strengths)
- ❖ **We share responsibility** (distribute work)
- ❖ **We do our part** (our individual responsibility)
- ❖ **We network** (seek additional expertise, go beyond what's in front of us)

Working together toward a common goal!

Finishing what you start, with your best effort!

## Business Entrepreneur Skills

- ❖ **We set goals** (what is the end product?)
- ❖ **We create a plan** (identify needs, make a map)
- ❖ **We benchmark** (set deadlines)
- ❖ **We draft** (make best attempt)
- ❖ **We revise** (get feedback, improve)
- ❖ **We use resources** (access support)

## Communication Skills

- ❖ **We organize** (structure logically)
- ❖ **We listen** (seek to clarify)
- ❖ **We code-switch** (know the audience)
- ❖ **We present** (deliver/illustrate info & ideas)
- ❖ **We use strategies** (plan our medium, format information, tone, language)
- ❖ **We engage** (use strategies to deliver, motivate, engage)

Expressing yourself so that others understand!

Thinking deeply in order to create a new understanding!

## Academic & Career Skills

- ❖ **We identify** (name it, explain it)
- ❖ **We analyze** (break it down)
- ❖ **We evaluate** (judge it)
- ❖ **We justify** (argue it with evidence)
- ❖ **We compare** (make connections)
- ❖ **We synthesize** (put it together)
- ❖ **We develop** (use knowledge in a new way)





# Skills for Academic and Career Success

## I. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- a. Applying knowledge, skills, and experience to solve problems arising in everyday life and in the work place.
- b. Asking the right questions while exercising critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- c. Demonstrating decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school, and community contexts.
- d. Demonstrating intentional metacognition in problem solving and decision making.

## II. Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship

- a. Creating original works while keeping the outcome and audience in mind.
- b. Employing and documenting a systematic approach to creative thinking and design.
- c. Taking the initiative to reflect on, accept critical feedback, and grow from experiences without being fearful of failure.

## III. Communication and Collaboration

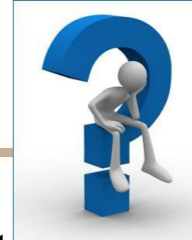
- a. Articulating ideas clearly and coherently in oral, written, and non-verbal communication, while keeping in mind task, discipline, and audience.
- b. Cooperating to accomplish a common goal by valuing all contributions, evidence and assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work.
- c. Use social awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.

## IV. Media Evaluation and Application

- a. Accessing and evaluating information from a wide variety of sources.
- b. Using digital tools to create authentic relevant projects that demonstrate complex conceptual understandings.
- c. Using digital tools to effectively communicate and collaborate.
- d. Using digital tools ethically in their personal and professional lives.
- e. Able to use digital tools with a global perspective.

## V. Life and Leadership Skills

- a. Developing self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- b. Develop relevant strategies and take action to realize post-secondary goals.
- c. Demonstrating respect for multiple perspectives and actively seeking to understand other cultures.
- d. Conducting themselves ethically and with integrity, in personal and professional relationships.
- e. Engaging in and creating opportunities to be of service in the community; and participating in local, national, and global communities.



The LAHSA pathway outcomes are a set of 21st century skill sets and abilities to support student achievement in their future plans and extended education.

**ARTS-** Creatively employ a set of technical and/or performance skills to execute a vision.



**CITIZENSHIP-** Contribute to the global and local community as culturally aware and informed citizens and leaders.

**COMMUNICATION-** Articulate ideas in a clear and organized fashion in multiple ways.



**CRITICAL THINKING-** Strategically and systematically solve problems through analysis and inquiry.

**COLLABORATION-** Maintain accountability within the dynamics of a team.



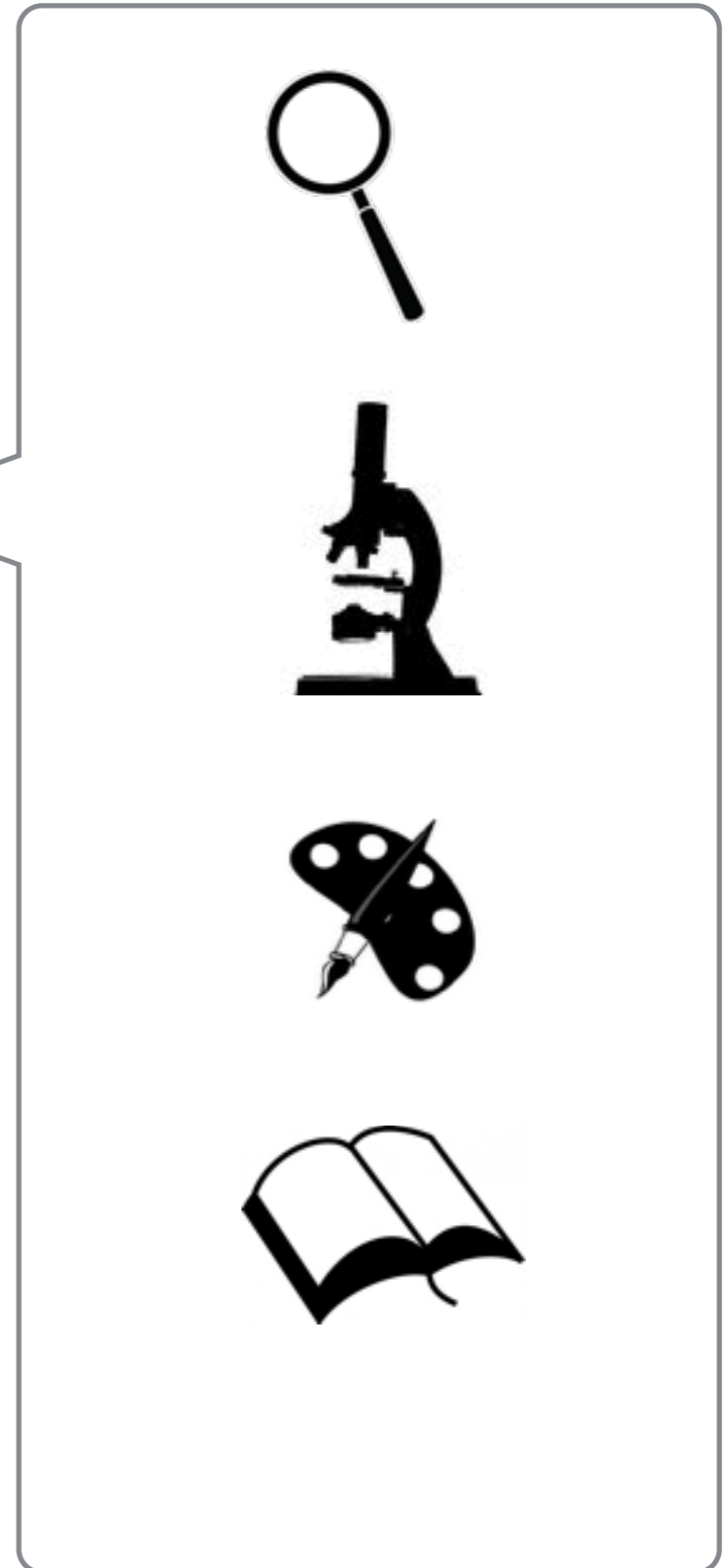
**FORWARD THINKING-** Independently set goals and implement a plan, reflect on current academic and postsecondary goals, and exercise persistence.



2

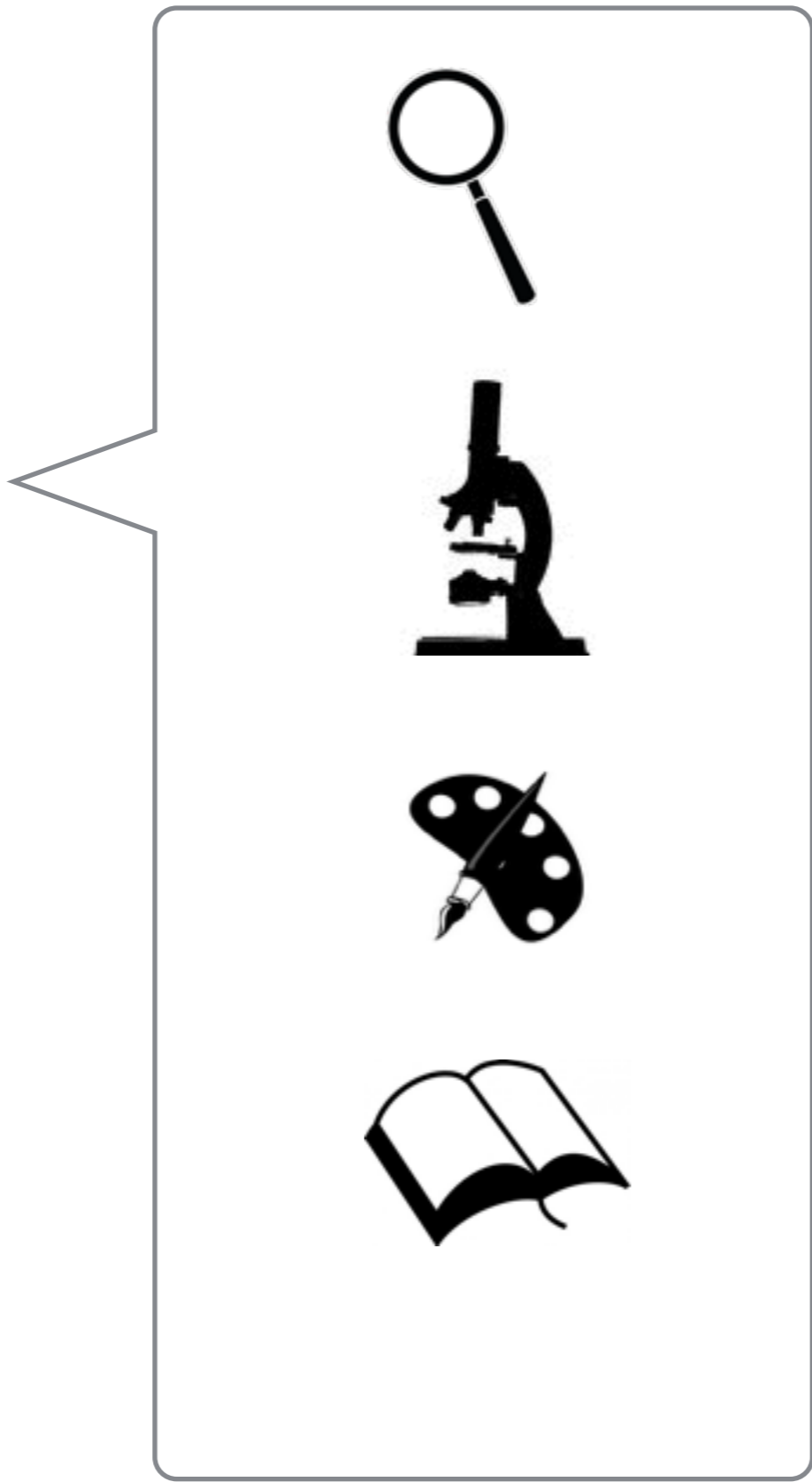


portfolio & defense





2



# 2



**research**

<i>Rubric</i>				



**inquiry**

<i>Rubric</i>				



**creative  
expression**

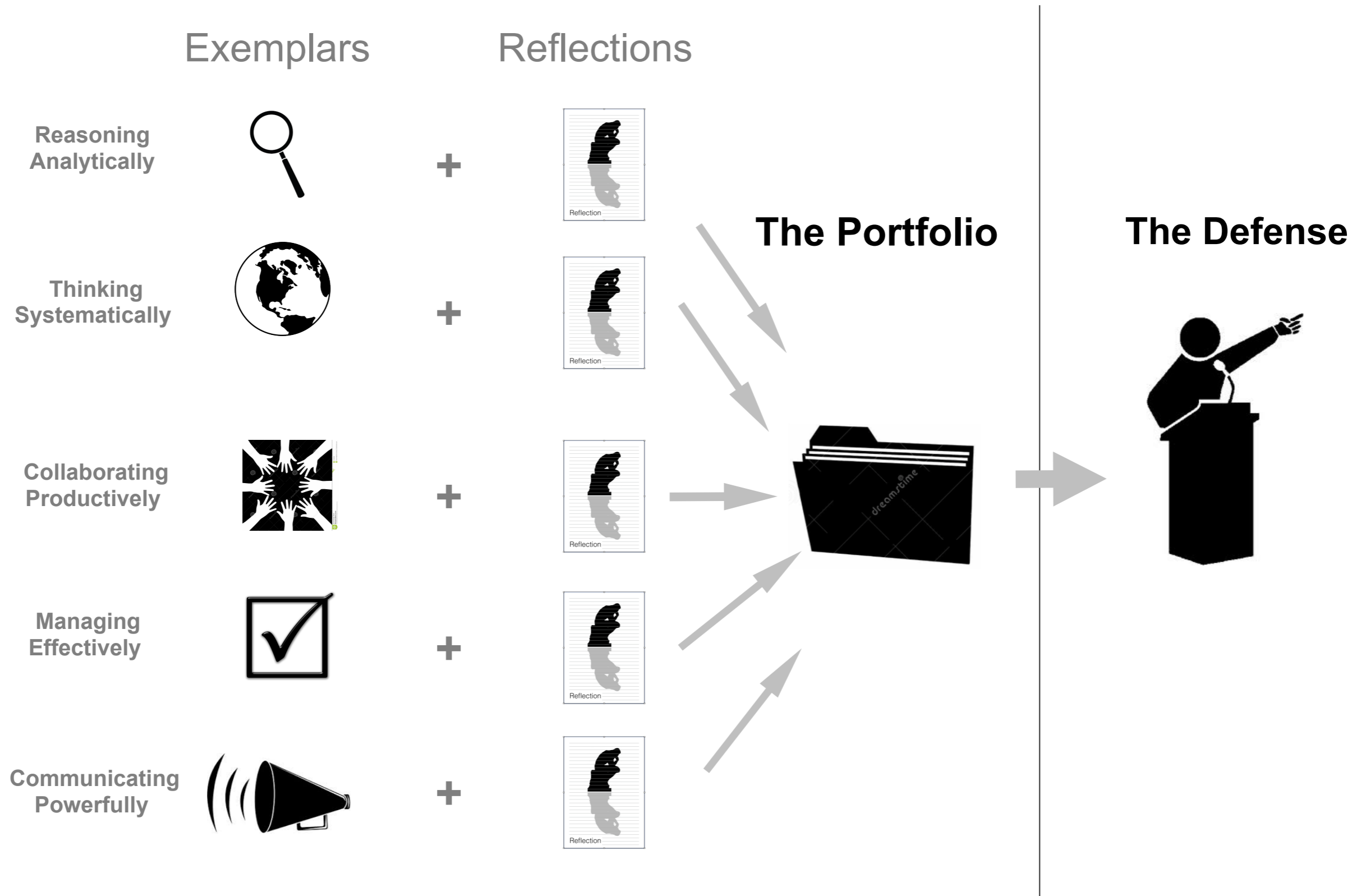
<i>Rubric</i>				



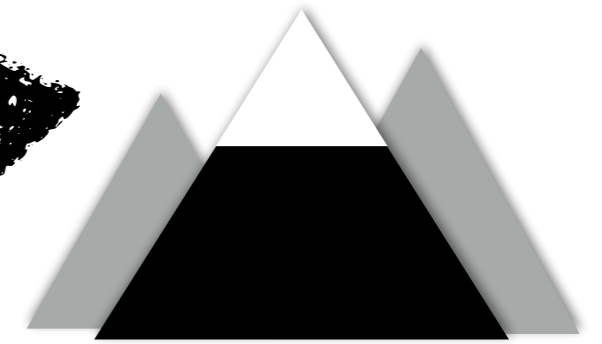
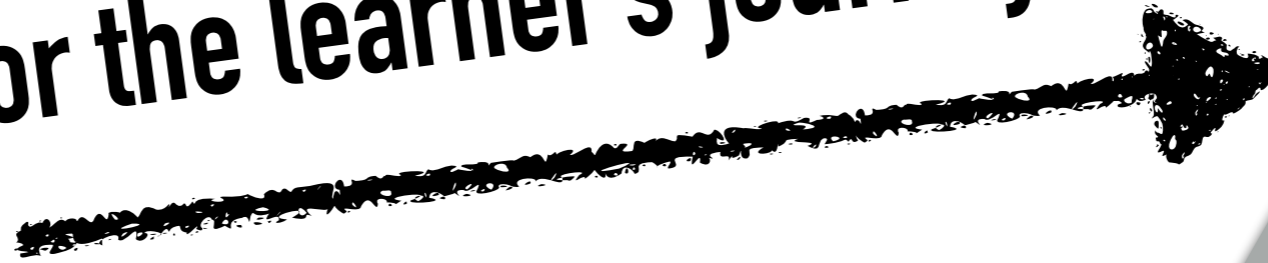
**analysis**

<i>Rubric</i>				

# The SEEQS Portfolio-Defense: An Overview



**design for the learner's journey to success**



**3**

## Structures & Pedagogies

- Project-based learning (PBL)
- School schedule that supports PBL
- Regular exhibitions of learning
- Advisory system
- Common planning time for teachers
- Student internships
- Competency-based grading

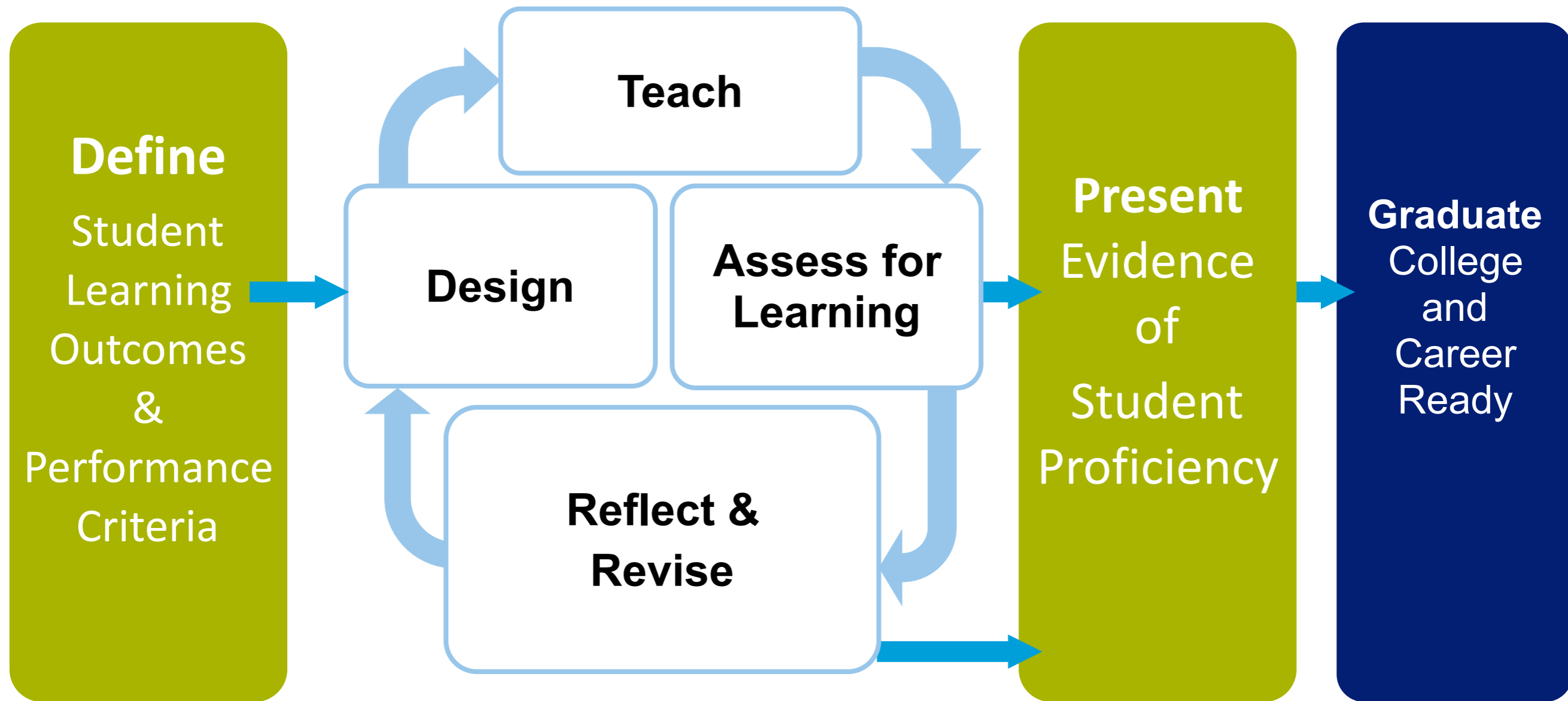


# performance assessment system

Do



# Performance Assessment System



**Cycle of Continuous Improvement:**  
For Teacher Teams & Students

# *Our Model*

**Portfolio &  
Defense**

**Student Defense**

**Portfolio**



# Our Model

**Portfolio &  
Defense**

**Student Defense**

**Portfolio**

Exhibitions

Work Learning  
Experience

Projects/Tasks

Interventions

Strong Daily  
Instruction

Advisory

Academic  
Culture













# LINKED LEARNING

*Life comes to school*

# Behaviors of Learning and Teaching

## Linked Learning is...

<b>COLLABORATIVE</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work With Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Regularly working with industry and postsecondary partners as learning resources and project clients.</li><li>▪ Practicing teamwork skills in a variety of collaborative teams and settings.</li><li>▪ Using industry-specific norms, strategies and technology tools to make their teamwork efficient and effective.</li></ul>
<b>STUDENT-DIRECTED</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work Students Lead</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Designing their interdisciplinary learning experiences and organizing, revising, and self-monitoring a learning plan.</li><li>▪ Learning through an inquiry-based approach where their questions, choices, insights, and solutions lead the way.</li><li>▪ Pursuing learning through feedback, reflection, revision, and defense of work.</li></ul>
<b>OUTCOME-FOCUSED</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work With a Goal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Creating, using, seeking feedback on, and revising plans for project work and for their college and career goals.</li><li>▪ Explaining how their daily work helps them master project, course, and pathway outcomes.</li><li>▪ Completing complex tasks and persevering when facing learning challenges.</li></ul>
<b>RELEVANT</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work That Matters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Engaging in projects of personal interest that are authentic to an industry sector and matter to external clients.</li><li>▪ Using state-of-the-art, industry-specific technologies to produce work that reflects standards of the workplace.</li><li>▪ Participating in a developmental sequence of work-based learning experiences.</li></ul>
<b>RIGOROUS</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work That Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Engaging in deep critical thinking using challenging material and industry-specific problem-solving tools.</li><li>▪ Designing and publicly defending high-quality project solutions.</li><li>▪ Articulating how they are mastering the Common Core State Standards and other pathway outcomes.</li></ul>
<b>INTEGRATED</b>	<i>Students can be seen...</i>
 <b>Work That Connects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Intentionally using concepts and skills from pathway theme courses in core academic courses—and vice versa.</li><li>▪ Making connections across core academic and career technical subjects in theme-based interdisciplinary projects.</li><li>▪ Engaging in work-based learning experiences that link directly with core academic and career technical courses.</li></ul>

# Elections Spanish Brochure

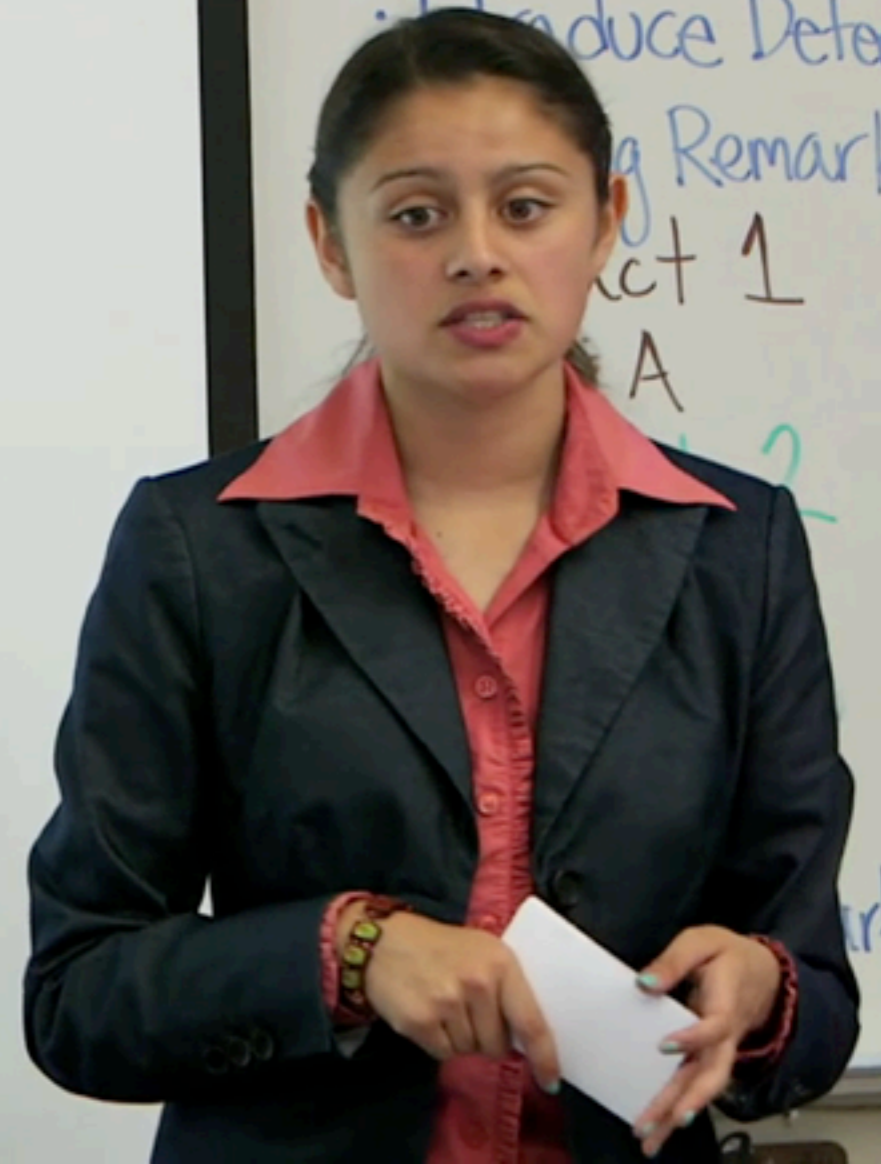
Spanish Language

Propositions on 2012 CA ballot

Team platform paper

Pages

- Welcome
- Purpose
- Process
- Norms
- Introduce Defending
- Making Remarks
- Act 1
- A
- 2
- marks





KNOW

**How are portfolio-defense  
systems built?**

**Explore the resources on the webpage.  
Follow your nose. Look at examples of  
what fellow pathways are doing.**

Do



**With a trio, share something you found  
in your browsing that  
struck/puzzled/excited you . . .**

Do




Do



Know

Reflect



**How could portfolio-  
defense serve the  
students at your  
pathway?**

*Reflect*



# How teaching & learning shifts in a performance assessment system

▶ **competencies** vs. coverage

▶ **demonstration** vs. regurgitation

▶ **revision for quality** vs. single attempts

## RHETORICAL DEVICES & APPEALS ESSAY

SKILL GAINED, LEADERSHIP SKILL, & WORLD APPLICATION

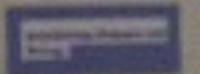
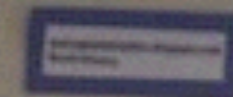
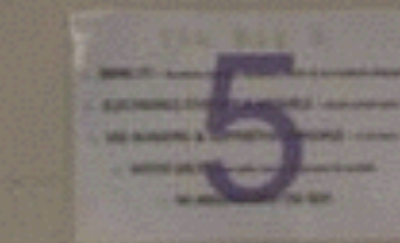
- Power & Persuasion
- Mastery of Communicating Powerfully
- Use in career
- Politics

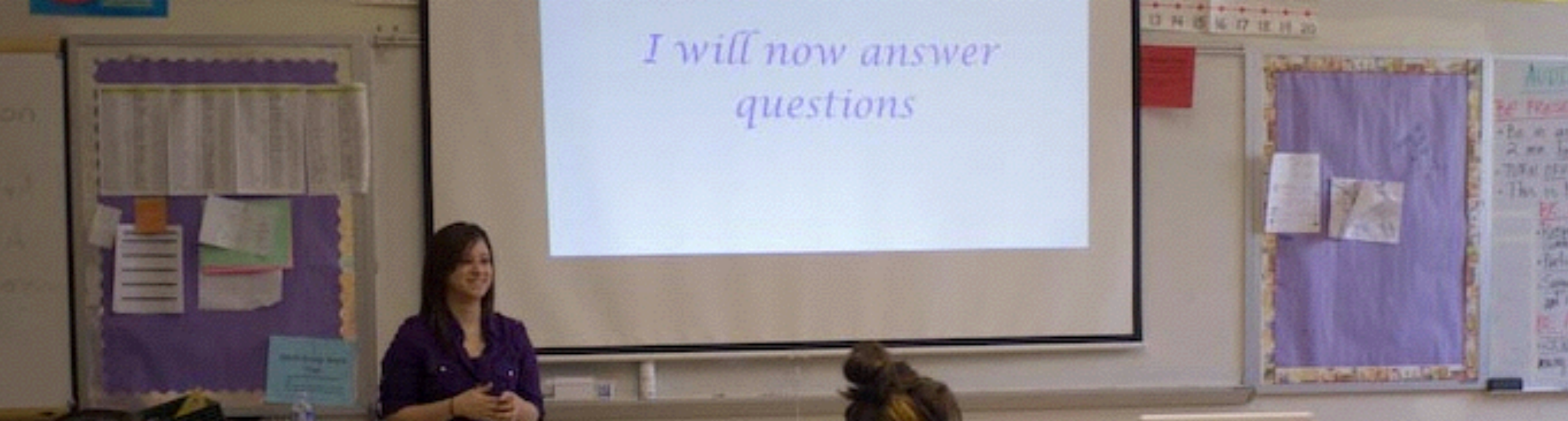


artifacts of work serve as  
**evidence of skills**

## EVIDENCE

"The sight of women preparing dinner always reminded me of times I used to watch my mother cook. Boys weren't allowed in the kitchen."





more focus on  
**mastery and competency**





more teachers collaborating in  
the analysis of student work

*Graduation Portfolio 2011 Presentation Notes*

<i>Presenter Name</i>				<i>Date</i>
<i>Artifact 1</i>				
<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>NC</i>	
<i>Artifact 2</i>				

**more  
support and  
coaching  
as needed for  
re-attempts**



# Teacher Feedback

- ▶ 100% of participating lead teachers cited the project as “valuable” to their pathway (74% gave it a 5 out of 5 on the value scale)
- ▶ 100% of participating lead teachers recommend portfolio-defense to a Linked Learning pathway that doesn’t have one (74% say “It’s vital.”)

“

Conversations have deepened  
around rigor for student work—  
projects, assessments, rubrics.  
What are we measuring and why?

”

“

For the first time, students are actually connecting their school work assignments to what they will do after school.

”



“

Students are talking about how they used skills that they didn't even think about before, as they are doing assignments. They now are looking at what and how they are learning, not just doing assignments.

”

“

The defense really gave us **SOLID** student data. By participating on the panels, we were able to analyze student work with the students in front of us. As a result, we were able to reflect on our own teacher, instruction, planning, etc.

”

“

This is really helped shift the focus from our needs to the students' needs, and it has really helped shape our PD to improving student achievement in a concrete way.

”

“

**Every school should go through this!!!**

”

# SENIOR DEFENSES 2015

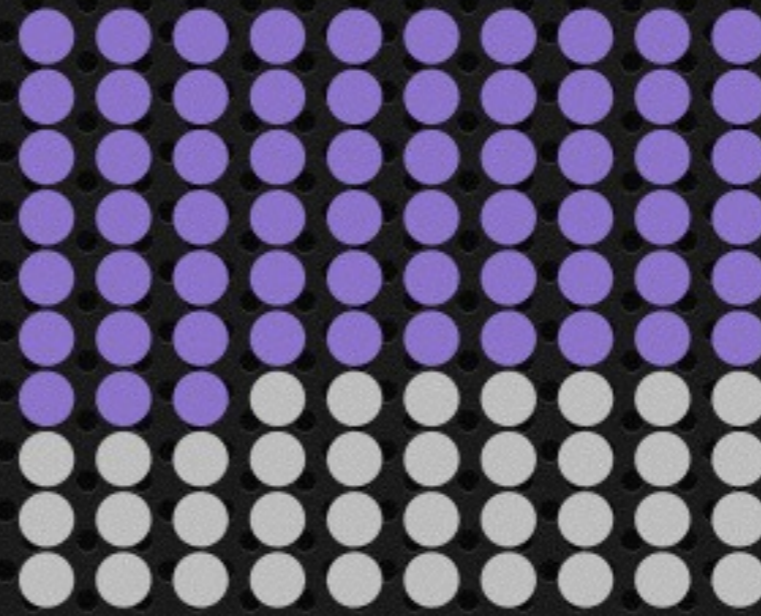
97 Seniors 91 Defenses 4095 Minutes 68.25 Hours

90%

61%

PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SEEING VALUE IN THE SENIOR DEFENSE

Students who passed Students who did not pass



64%  
PASS

36%  
NO PASS

6 NO-SHOWS

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

I felt prepared for my senior defense.

66%

The senior defense was a valuable process.

80%

I learned about myself by doing the senior defense

85%

my senior  
defense.

66%

it has been a  
valuable process.

80%

by doing the  
senior defense

85%

## WHAT DID YOU LEARN BY DOING YOUR SENIOR DEFENSE?

"...That I really do have a passion for something and I am confident in myself."

"I found myself ... I really had to go to a place emotionally that I [had] never [been]."

"When we do an assignment there is a lot that we can reflect on that we as students don't notice."

"To be honest, what didn't I learn? At first I was like, this project is so stupid, I don't want to do it... When I was done with this project I realized that if it wasn't for this school I wouldn't be the person I am today. LAHSA has changed me in a very positive way and I'm very thankful for that."

66%

80%

85%

## WHAT DID YOU LEARN BY DOING YOUR SENIOR DEFENSE?

"...That I really do have a passion for something and I am confident in myself."

"I found myself ... I really had to go to a place emotionally that I [had] never [been]."

"When we do an assignment there is a lot that we can reflect on that we as students don't notice."

"To be honest, what didn't I learn? At first I was like, this project is so stupid, I don't want to do it... When I was done with this project I realized that if it wasn't for this school I wouldn't be the person I am today. LAHSA has changed me in a very positive way and I'm very thankful for that."

# ways to get started . . .



1. 10th or 12th grade
2. presentations of learning, based on pathway outcomes
3. leveraging an existing Linked Learning–style project
4. establishing “portfolio habits”
5. student-led conferences
6. ?



**Team time:**  
**discussing concepts, playing with**  
**ideas, imagining possibilities**

Do





# What have you learned?

- **one take-away**
- **one puzzle**

Reflect

Stay in touch . . .

*Justin Wells*

*justin@envisionlearning.org*

*@jusowells*

**Thank You!**



# What Happened Last Year (2014–15)

- ▶ 10 Linked Learning Pathways designed and implemented a portfolio-defense system
- ▶ 1106 LAUSD students stood up and defended their learning
- ▶ LL Pathways started to define an LAUSD-wide vision for portfolio-defense



# Cohort I

- Los Angeles High School of the Arts (LAHSA)
- Los Angeles School of Global Studies
- School for the Visual Arts and Humanities (SVAH)
- STEM Academy of Hollywood
- New Media Academy at Hollywood High
- Community Health Advocates School (CHAS)
- Responsible Indigenous Social Entrepreneurs (RISE)
- School of Global and Media Arts, Fremont HS
- Critical Design and Gaming School (CDAGS)
- Law & Public Service Academy, Roosevelt HS

