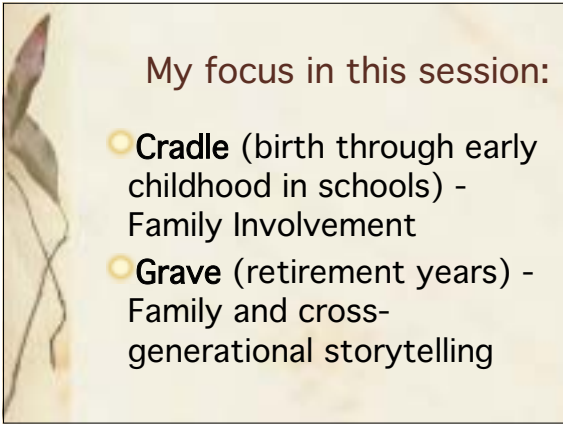




ePortfolios for Lifelong Learning: Cradle to Grave

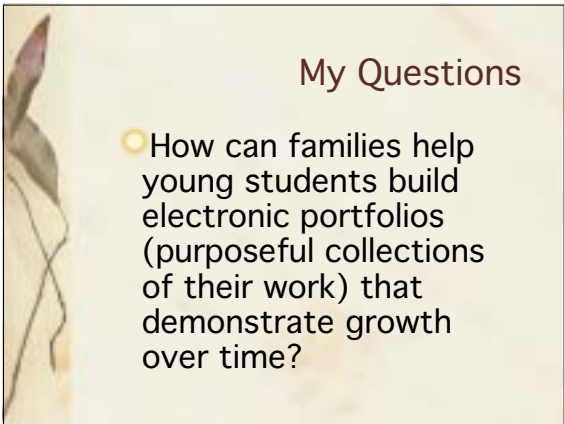
Dr. Helen C. Barrett
International Society for
Technology in Education
University of Alaska Anchorage

ePortfolio Australia conference, Melbourne, December 7, 2004



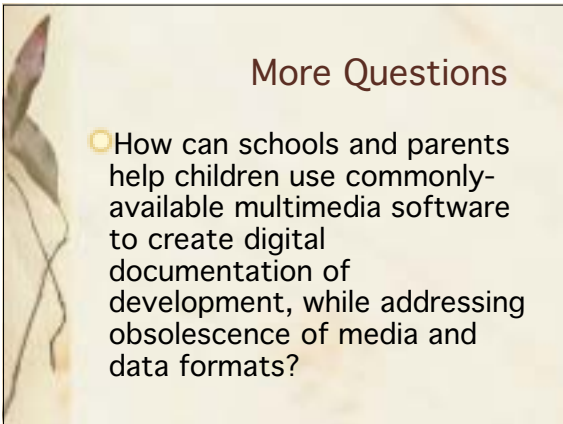
My focus in this session:

- **Cradle** (birth through early childhood in schools) - Family Involvement
- **Grave** (retirement years) - Family and cross-generational storytelling



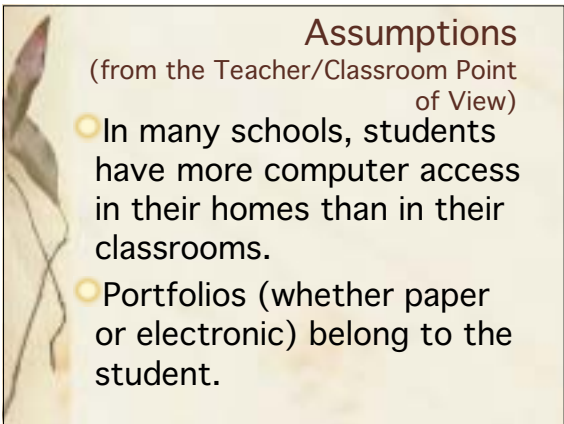
My Questions

- How can families help young students build electronic portfolios (purposeful collections of their work) that demonstrate growth over time?



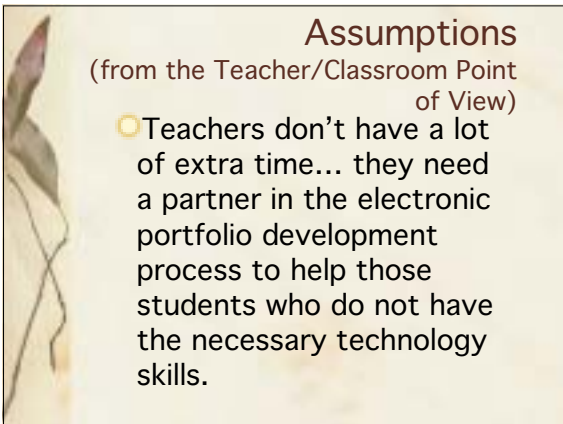
More Questions

- How can schools and parents help children use commonly-available multimedia software to create digital documentation of development, while addressing obsolescence of media and data formats?



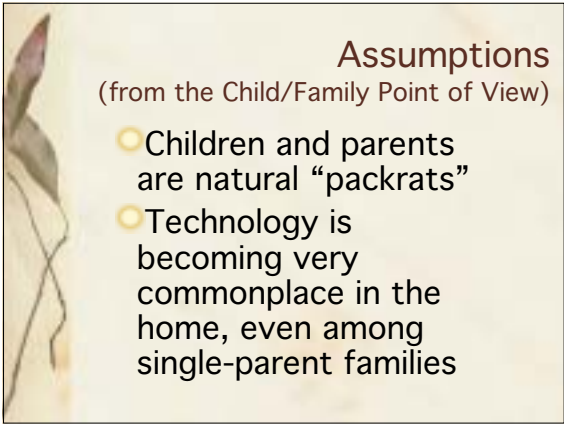
Assumptions
(from the Teacher/Classroom Point of View)

- In many schools, students have more computer access in their homes than in their classrooms.
- Portfolios (whether paper or electronic) belong to the student.



Assumptions
(from the Teacher/Classroom Point of View)

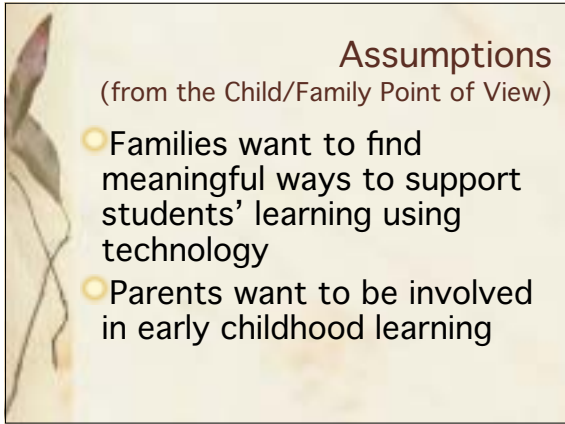
- Teachers don't have a lot of extra time... they need a partner in the electronic portfolio development process to help those students who do not have the necessary technology skills.



Assumptions

(from the Child/Family Point of View)

- Children and parents are natural “packrats”
- Technology is becoming very commonplace in the home, even among single-parent families



Assumptions

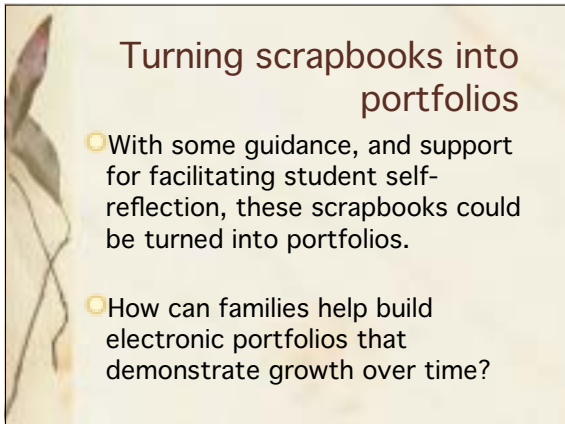
(from the Child/Family Point of View)

- Families want to find meaningful ways to support students’ learning using technology
- Parents want to be involved in early childhood learning



Families as e-Portfolio Partners

- Find strategies to involve families as partners in the e-portfolio development process
- Use home computers to make up for the lack of teacher time and access to computers in classrooms.
- Take advantage of the popularity of scrapbooking to involve families in e-portfolio development.



Turning scrapbooks into portfolios


- With some guidance, and support for facilitating student self-reflection, these scrapbooks could be turned into portfolios.
- How can families help build electronic portfolios that demonstrate growth over time?



What’s Next?

A Gift for the Future A Partnership for Today

How to extend this process beyond the classroom...



Documenting our Families’ Stories

- There are a group of people (personal historians) who are helping elderly people recall and record their life stories.
- A new trend is to record these stories in audio and video formats (digital storytelling).
- How about beginning the collection process much earlier in life?

Leaving a Legacy Beyond the Classroom

- ◻ Couple the interest in **scrapbooking** with the widespread interest in **genealogy**, and you have *Project Progeny*: or genealogy in reverse.
- ◻ We have the technology today to begin telling our stories for current and *future* generations, not just in words, but in sounds and images, stored in a media that will last longer than magnetic tape or celluloid.

Beware of the obsolescence of Magnetic Media

Why Family Stories and History are Lost:
Procrastination

- ◻ **Rating the Life of Archival Media**
 - ◻ Inkjet photos - 5 years
 - ◻ Audio & video tapes - 25 years
 - ◻ Boxes of stuff in the attic - 50 years
 - ◻ Childhood memories - 75 years
 - ◻ CD-ROMs - Over 100 years
 - ◻ A well printed and bound book - 100s of years

(Source: Tombo Media:
<http://www.tombomedia.com/Notes.html>)

Issues about File Formats

- ◻ Will you be able to read these files 10-15 years from now?
- ◻ Are they in a standard, generic or proprietary formats?
- ◻ What about text files?
- ◻ Make sure word processing files are saved in plain text or RTF formats.

We need a vision of the possible

- ◻ We have a baby boom generation who are becoming grandparents
 - ◻ many have or can afford the technology
 - ◻ their children (and grandchildren) have the technology skills to make it happen.
- ◻ Involving our children and grandchildren in building a new family tradition:
 - ◻ documenting our family values and preserving our stories

Cross-Generational Collaboration

- ◻ We share the development process and build the younger generation's commitment
- ◻ It is their responsibility for insuring that these digital stories are preserved and transferred to the next appropriate media every decade or so...

whatever that media turns out to be.

Family Storytelling as Life Skill Development

- ◻ Lifelong Learning Skills
 - ◻ Reflection
 - ◻ Storytelling
 - ◻ Multimedia authoring
- ◻ Genealogy

Process...not product

“Although the historical roadmap may never be complete, it is often the journey that provides the richest rewards.”

Charles Williams

<http://homepage.mac.com/williamszone/dostal/dostal.html>

A Gift for the Future

- What a gift we can give to our descendants: to know us through songs and stories, laughter and tears... to preserve our family values, heritage and the celebrations of our lives.

A Partnership for Today

- If we introduce this digital collection/ e-portfolio strategy beginning in early childhood classrooms, we give new meaning and definition to **family involvement** and partnership in our children's education.

Dr. Helen Barrett

- <http://digitalfamilystory.com>
- <http://electronicportfolios.org>
- <http://homepage.mac.com/eportfolios/>