

# PORTFOLIO

*A Teacher's*  
**PROFESSIONAL  
PORTFOLIO**

**A Working Guide**



 <b>ETFO</b>	<b>Accountability</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>Recertification</b>		<b>NO</b>





**Elementary Teachers'**  
Federation of Ontario

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Dear ETFO Member:

ETFO believes strongly in voluntary, teacher-directed professional development that is meaningful. This belief statement is at the heart of our position of non-compliance with the mandatory recertification initiative dictated by the provincial government. To assist you in tracking your voluntary, teacher-directed professional development, ETFO has developed *A Teacher's Professional Portfolio: A Working Guide*.

Maintaining a personal, professional portfolio will allow you to develop a concrete record that demonstrates your commitment to life-long learning. The portfolio is a good management strategy for keeping your records in one place, a place where your documentation can be kept confidential and secure. This working guide will assist you to document your professional growth over the years and will clearly demonstrate your professional accountability.

*A Teacher's Professional Portfolio: A Working Guide* contains:

- ETFO's position on mandatory recertification
- ten reasons for keeping a professional portfolio
- guidelines for documenting your professional learning
- *ETFO's Professional Learning Experiences Menu* to assist in goal setting
- the Ontario College of Teachers' *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*
- a tracking template for record-keeping with samples
- illustrations of storage and security ideas
- an annotated bibliography for further reading

This working guide offers many suggestions to assist you in the important task of planning and documenting your professional growth throughout your career. Within the context of increasing accountability, it is crucial that you have the information that will prove that you are engaged in professional growth on an on-going basis.

We welcome ideas and suggestions you have on this important professional activity.

Sincerely,



Phyllis Benedict  
President

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## **The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario Accountability YES: Recertification NO**

ETFO supports accountability measures that appropriately address the importance of ensuring teacher competence and student achievement. An integral component of such measures must be that teachers have the flexibility to choose the professional development that best meets their individual needs and supports their work with students.

ETFO also believes that the scope of professional development activities must be broad, to capture the diversity of individual needs. In our position paper, *Ensuring High Professional Standards in Ontario Education: A Response to the Teacher Testing Proposal*, 1999 we state the following:

"Teachers have a responsibility to engage in on-going personal professional growth.

Personal professional growth is varied and wide-ranging. It includes formal and informal learning, directly and indirectly related to teacher practice.

The Ontario College of Teachers must acknowledge the broad spectrum of professional development activities in which teachers routinely, voluntarily engage.

There is a need to recognize aspects of teaching which extend beyond teaching the curriculum. The abilities to organize and manage a classroom, interact with students and communicate effectively with parents are crucial to quality teaching."

### **Your Professional Portfolio**

Your professional development activities at any time in your career should be tied to your growth plan in which you identify specific learning goals. Your plan will also reflect the context in which you teach, including your students, the school's action plan, school board priorities and Ministry of Education curriculum and assessment policies.

## **A Teacher's Professional Portfolio: A Working Guide**

A portfolio is an effective strategy for tracking your professional development and growth. There are many reasons why portfolios are a good choice. Here are ten reasons:

1. A portfolio puts you in control of your own professional development to meet your needs and those of your students.
2. It demonstrates your commitment to life-long learning.
3. Your portfolio can lead to the enhancement of your professional learning to provide quality education for students.
4. A portfolio can encourage self-directed learning.
5. A portfolio will provide detailed documentation of meaningful learning based upon your unique professional needs, as well as supporting genuine professional accountability.
6. A portfolio will capture a variety of professional development experiences rather than a prescribed "one-size fits all" *Professional Learning Program*.
7. It allows you to set your own professional goals, demonstrate your progress in achieving those goals, and affirm your professional learning.
8. Your portfolio will encourage you to document insights and meaningful applications within your professional life through reflection.
9. It provides tangible evidence of your own professional growth over time and captures some of the successes and challenges of your professional life.
10. Your professional portfolio provides a powerful resource for performance reviews, job interviews, career advancement and self-assessment.

## Documenting Your Professional Learning

It is important that you personally maintain and document your professional development activities. These materials provide one approach to developing and maintaining a professional portfolio. You may choose to use all or part of this working guide, or use a format of your choice.

### What's Inside?

There are several components to this tracking process.

1. The *ETFO Professional Learning Experiences Menu* provides a list of activities that you can choose from to meet your professional goals.
2. The *ETFO Professional Learning Experiences Menu* has been adapted from the Ontario College of Teachers' *Professional Learning Framework*. Hence the menu is linked to the Ontario College of Teachers' *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*. These standards are now a key accountability tool within the profession. An overview of the standards is part of this guide.
3. The *ETFO Professional Portfolio Tracking Template* provides a place to record your professional development activities.
4. There are several sample templates provided:
  - a) grade 5 classroom teacher
  - b) French immersion teacher
  - c) occasional teacher
  - d) consultant/coordinator.
5. Examples of storage and security ideas are pictured.
6. An annotated bibliography is included to extend your reading in this area.

## ETFO Professional Learning Experiences Menu

The following is a list of professional learning experiences that you may choose to participate in and keep track of within your portfolio. Please note that these are examples. There are others you may want to include within your portfolio.

The Ontario College of Teachers recognizes a broad range of professional learning experiences in its *Professional Learning Framework*. The *Professional Learning Framework* should not be confused with the *Professional Learning Program (PLP)* that prescribes 14 mandatory courses that College members are required to complete every five years for recertification purposes. ETFO does not support participation in the PLP.

The *ETFO Professional Learning Experiences Menu* has been designed with the *Professional Learning Framework* in mind. It allows you to incorporate a broad range of your professional learning within the *ETFO Professional Portfolio Tracking Template*. Space has been provided to expand this list of activities.

1. **Academic Programs (AP)**
  - Enrolled in a University course
  - Enrolled in a College course
  - Enrolled in a Federation course
  - Enrolled in other institution or organization course
  -
  
2. **Research Activities (RA)**
  - Conducted an individual inquiry related to teaching and student learning
  - Conducted/planned a research activity
  - Worked collaboratively within a team to research topics related to teaching and student learning
  - Participated in on-line discussion groups related to research activities
  - Investigated and accessed educational research
  - Applied educational research
  -

3. **Professional Networks (PN)**
  - Contributed to a subject association, e.g. Consultants'/Coordinators' Association of Primary Educators (CAPE); Ontario Association of Junior Educators (OAJE)
  - Contributed to the work of the Federation
  - Contributed to another professional organization
  - Participated in a school-based committee
  - Participated in a family of schools committee
  - Participated in a district school board committee
  - Participated in a local curriculum/grade study group
  - Served on a local school/community committee
  - Served on a local community committee
  - Served on a school council
  -
  
4. **Professional Activities (PA)**
  - Maintained a professional portfolio
  - Visited to observe exemplary practice
  - Attended a professional workshop
  - Read an educational book, journal or article
  - Attended a professional conference
  - Discussed educational resources with a colleague(s)
  - Participated as a curriculum team member
  - Participated in an assessment project
  - Conducted an internet search of a professional topic of interest
  -
  
5. **Mentoring and Networking (MN)**
  - Mentored another member
  - Chose and worked with a mentor
  - Mentored a student teacher
  - Planned cooperatively with colleagues
  - Formed and attended a study group
  - Attended a study group
  - Joined a formal network within or outside the district school board
  - Participated in a district school board mentoring program
  - Participated in a Federation mentoring program
  - Mentored on-line
  -

6. **Professional Contributions (PC)**
  - Developed a professional workshop
  - Implemented a professional workshop
  - Developed a professional conference
  - Implemented a professional conference
  - Developed a professional resource/article
  - Published a professional resource/article
  -
  
7. **Learning Through Practice (LP)**
  - Developed a curriculum resource
  - Implemented a curriculum unit/lesson
  - Participated collaboratively in a school-based project
  - Implemented a new instructional strategy
  - Implemented a new assessment strategy
  - Conducted an action research project
  - Shared action research findings with others
  - Published an action research project
  - Piloted a new initiative
  - Piloted new material, e.g. science, reading or math programs
  -
  
8. **Technology and Learning (TL)**
  - Developed new technological skills
  - Participated in a list-serve
  - Integrated technology into classroom practice and teaching strategies
  - Enrolled in a distance education course
  -
  
9. **Learning Through Community Involvement (LC)**
  - Participated actively in a community initiative, e.g. volunteer, working member
  - Organized a community initiative, e.g. committee chair, director
  - Participated as a community organization board member
  -

## Using the ETFO Professional Portfolio Tracking Template

1. Decide the learning goal(s) that will be the focus for your yearly professional development. This may be done in collaboration with your school administrator.
2. Record the goal(s) on the *ETFO Professional Portfolio Tracking Template*.
3. Consider and choose experiences from the *ETFO Professional Learning Experiences Menu* that you could undertake to achieve the goal(s). The list of experiences is organized within nine categories. For ease of use within the template we have provided a key at the bottom of the template for each category.
4. Copy the experience(s) you have selected into the activity section of the template and add your specific details (see sample templates).
5. Record the date, time, number of hours and location of the activity into the template.
6. Under the source section of the template, identify the group/organization offering the learning activity. If you will be enclosing a sample, such as a certificate, mention it here. It is important to keep concrete evidence of your learning.
7. Record your reflections of the learning on the template. Reflections should be on-going and demonstrate actions you have taken as you extend your professional knowledge and expertise.

### Possible Additions to Your Portfolio

The template has been provided as a basic organizer. A record of previous learning could also be added. Consider including your Certificate of Qualification from the Ontario College of Teachers and a list of professional development experiences you have participated in over the course of your career. You should also keep your university/college transcripts, up-to-date resume, scholarships/awards received and other pertinent documentation in your portfolio.

# ETFO Professional Portfolio Tracking Template

My Learning Goal	Activity	Menu Key	Date/Time (# Hours/Location)	Source (Sample Enclosed)	Reflections

My Learning Goal	Activity	Menu Key	Date/Time (# Hours/Location)	Source (Sample Enclosed)	Reflections
To find ways to improve problem solving in my Grade 5 math program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended professional workshop: Math Problem Solving Junior Workshop offered by school board</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 10/01: 2.5 hours: Best Junior School</li> </ul>	ABC District School Board (Workshop Certificate enclosed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tried problem of the week with teaching strategies taken from workshop; will need to add extra time for student feedback</li> <li>Posted problem solving strategies chart in classroom for students; they found it useful</li> </ul>
To find ways to improve problem solving in my Grade 5 math program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read educational books, journal or article: Read Jayne Burns' article "Problem Solving in the Junior Division"</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 10/01: 2.5 hours: Best Junior School</li> </ul>	Reflections captured and enclosed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Added Jayne Burns' problem solving strategies onto the classroom chart</li> <li>Will observe over the next two weeks</li> <li>Strategies are of particular assistance to students who lack organizational and spatial skills</li> </ul>
To find ways to improve problem solving in my Grade 5 math program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented professional workshop: Gave a mini presentation to junior team in school on problem solving in math</li> </ul>	PC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 29/01: 1 hour: Planning and Preparation</li> <li>November 3/01: 1 hour Presentation Best Junior School</li> </ul>	Outline of workshop for staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants and I will use a number of suggestions from the presentation and agree to share insights on Dec. 18/01</li> <li>Participants agree group suggestions were helpful and would like to participate in a family of schools study group</li> </ul>
To find ways to improve problem solving in my Grade 5 math program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formed and attended a study group: Set up and attended a study group to discuss problem solving strategies in math for junior students</li> </ul>	MN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>December 18/01: 1 hour Planning and Preparation</li> <li>January 8/02: 2 hours Meeting One</li> <li>February 10/02: 2 hours Meeting Two</li> <li>March 30/02: 2 hours Meeting Three</li> <li>Apr. 28/02, etc.</li> <li>All at Best Junior School</li> </ul>	Agendas for each Study Group Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting 1 - Brainstormed and decided group focus will be Jayne Burns' video "Mathematics for Today" and book</li> <li>Meeting 2 - Group viewed Jayne Burns' video and discussed</li> <li>Meeting 3 - The most important strategy that I learned from my study group is that junior students require a multi-sensory approach to problem solving; math should be enjoyable for students</li> </ul>

**ETFO Professional Portfolio  
French Immersion Tracking Template**

My Learning Goal	Activity	Menu Key	Date/Time (# Hours/Location)	Source (Sample Enclosed)	Reflections
Learn more about the use of AppleWorks with my Gr. 4 Immersion Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended a series of 4 ETFO workshops on technology</li> </ul>	PA TL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 8, 15, 22 and 29/01: 8 Hours: Informatique Junior Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (certificate and workshop agendas enclosed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used word-processor in my creative writing program - helps students with peer- editing</li> <li>Used the database in my social studies program - must give further help to students in creation of fields</li> </ul>
Become more aware of software to assist in implementation of the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended an Educational Computing Organization of Ontario Elementary Conference</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 20/01: 6 Hours: Logiciel Public School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ontario Educational Software Service (OESS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Became more aware of OESS and where to order Ministry licensed software</li> <li>Became more aware of who to contact at the school to get a copy of many software titles</li> </ul>
Develop a network of Junior French Immersion contacts to assist with the Oral Communication Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used the district school board's First Class Intranet to communicate with other Junior French Immersion teachers</li> </ul>	RA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Throughout 2000/2001: 30 minutes per week: Accessed network through school server and home connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A print-out of correspondence, every 2 weeks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I enjoyed the suggestions received from peers. I am able to immediately practice the suggestions in class</li> <li>My students' oral communication skills have improved</li> </ul>

**MENU KEY**

AP	Academic Programs	PA	Professional Activities
LC	Learning Through Community Involvement	PC	Professional Contributions
LP	Learning Through Practice	PN	Professional Networks
MN	Mentoring and Networking	RA	Research Activities
		TL	Technology and Learning

**ETFO**  
Accountability  
Recertification **YES**  
**NO**

My Learning Goal	Activity	Menu Key	Date/Time (# Hours/Location)	Source (Sample Enclosed)	Reflections
To increase my repertoire of emergency lessons to use on short notice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended a "make and take" workshop for OTs arranged by an ETFO OT Local</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 6/01: 2 hours: ETFO Local Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flyer from OT Local Certificate</li> <li>Program overview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to reorganize my ideas binder</li> <li>Will volunteer to be on the planning committee for next workshop (leadership goal)</li> </ul>
To improve my bank of strategies for teaching math in the Junior Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended a school board Junior Math workshop on problem solving</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 10/01: 2 ½ hours: Best Middle School</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certificate</li> <li>Program overview</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tried one strategy with my Junior class, will try another next week</li> <li>Students responded positively</li> </ul>
To improve my bank of strategies for teaching math in the Junior Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compiled a list of strategies and references to submit for a newsletter article</li> </ul>	PC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November 10/01: 1 ½ hours: spent compiling list</li> <li>Wrote article: 2 hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copy of article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pleased that my article was published</li> <li>Will work with a colleague on a second article</li> </ul>
To improve my bank of strategies for teaching math in the Junior Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set-up a study group to compile and share math strategies for the Junior Division</li> </ul>	MN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October 2001 - May, 2002: 1½ hours: Met the third week of every month: Rotated home visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of math strategies</li> <li>Agendas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gained a lot more ideas for teaching math</li> <li>My students are more enthusiastic</li> </ul>

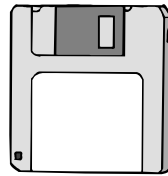
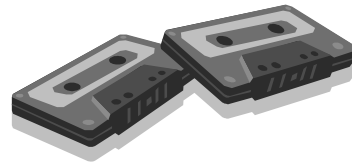


AP	Academic Programs	PA	Professional Activities
LC	Learning Through Community Involvement	PC	Professional Contributions
LP	Learning Through Practice	PN	Professional Networks
MIN	Mentoring and Networking	RA	Research Activities
		TL	Technology and Learning

MENU KEY

My Learning Goal	Activity	Menu Key	Date/Time (# Hours/Location)	Source (Sample Enclosed)	Reflections
To refine my group facilitation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended ETFO's provincial conference on facilitation skills</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>March 25/02: 5 hours: District School Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certificate</li> <li>Overview of program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implemented two new facilitation skills in my next workshop</li> <li>Received positive feedback</li> </ul>
To refine my group facilitation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viewed a video on "Powerful Facilitation Strategies"</li> </ul>	RA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 10/02: 30 minutes: Teachers' Resource Centre, District School Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catalogue description</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Became more self aware of how to effectively use my body language</li> </ul>
To improve my workshop presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A colleague videotaped part of my workshop on Primary reading. We critiqued it together</li> </ul>	LP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>April 1/02: Happy Valley School: video discussion took two hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List of positive points and things to work on based on my video</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified two areas I want to work on and will ask for feedback in future workshops</li> </ul>
To improve my workshop presentation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended a "how to" presentation skills workshop offered by ETFO</li> </ul>	PA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May 20/02: 2 hours: PD day, District School Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certificate</li> <li>Overview of program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learned new strategies on how to insert humour into my presentations</li> </ul>

## A Teacher's Professional Portfolio: Storage and Security Ideas



## Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession

The following five statements comprise the Standards of Practice for the teaching profession. The key elements expand on these statements.

### **Commitment to Students and Student Learning**

Teachers demonstrate care for and commitment to students. They are dedicated to engaging and supporting student learning. Teachers treat students equitably and with respect. They encourage students to grow as individuals and as contributing members of society. Teachers assist students to become life-long learners.

### **Professional Knowledge**

Professional knowledge is the foundation for teaching practice. Teachers know the curriculum, the subject matter, the student and teaching practice. They know education-related legislation, methods for communication, and ways to teach in a changing world.

### **Teaching Practice**

Teachers apply professional knowledge and understanding of the student, curriculum, teaching, and the changing context of the learning environment to promote student learning. They conduct ongoing assessment and evaluation of student progress. Teachers modify and refine teaching practice through continuous reflection.

### **Leadership and Community**

Teachers are educational leaders who create and sustain learning communities in their classrooms, in their schools, and in their profession. They collaborate with their colleagues and other professionals, with parents, and with other members of the community to enhance school programs and student learning.

### **Ongoing Professional Learning**

Teachers are learners who acknowledge the interdependence of teacher learning and student learning. Teachers engage in a continuum of professional growth to improve their practice.

*Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession,*  
Ontario College of Teachers, January 1999, pg. 6.

## A Teacher's Professional Portfolio: Annotated Bibliography

*Classroom Beginnings: Teachers' Guidebook*, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, 2000: Part 10, "What is a Lifelong Learner?", pg. 71- 79.

Part 10 of this practical book for beginning teachers focuses on the following topics that have relevance for teachers' professional portfolios: characteristics of lifelong learners; how adults learn; ways in which outstanding educators learn; what should be in a professional portfolio and why teachers need to have one; the role of reflection in professional practice; and the role and importance of a mentor.

*"The Case For The Teacher Portfolio"* by L. Andrejko, Journal of Staff Development, Volume 19, No. 4, Fall 1998, pg. 45-48.

This journal article describes the development and use of teacher portfolios within an American middle school. The specific purpose is to improve teacher expertise. Teacher portfolios are developed with five sections which are described and examples provided. The benefits and limitations of this professional growth tool are addressed. The portfolios have become part of the supervision for growth process between the teacher and principal. Increased student performance and teacher satisfaction, along with external recognition, are believed to be positive outcomes of this initiative.

*"Building Teacher Portfolios"* by L. Van Wagenen and K. Hibbard, Journal of Educational Leadership, Volume 55, No. 5, February 1998, pg. 26-29.

The setting for this article is a public school in Connecticut where students, teachers and administrators have become a community of learners through their portfolio experiences. A teacher reflects on her four-year learning experience in constructing the "Educator's Collaborative Portfolio". Emphasis is put on the importance of reflection as the teacher lives her daily working life. Peer collaboration is also a theme.

*The Portfolio Organizer: Succeeding with Portfolios in Your Classroom*, C. Rolheiser, B. Bower and L. Stevahn, ASCD, Virginia, USA, 2000, pg. 113-126.

The key ideas in Chapter 11, "Starting a Professional Portfolio" are: a rationale for maintaining one; a discussion of purposes, types and audiences; categories of entries; work and learning samples; reflections; storing and organizing; sharing the learning; goal-setting; and self evaluation. Most of this comprehensive book is devoted to student portfolios.

*"How Portfolios Can Shape Emerging Practice"* by N. Lyons, Journal of Educational Leadership, Volume 56, No. 8, May 1999, pg. 63-65.

This article is written from the perspective of a beginning teacher. The development and use of a teaching portfolio is viewed as a theoretical activity, "a broad metaphor that comes alive as you begin to formulate the theoretical orientation to teaching that is most valuable to you." (Shulman, 1998) Several elements of the portfolio process are addressed as are the challenges of maintaining a portfolio when entering full-time teaching. Emphasis is placed on the importance of developing "Habits of Mind" and "Bringing Knowledge to Consciousness".





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