Presentations of Learning and Portfolios – What's the Difference?

At The Crossroads School students are encouraged to reflect on their learning throughout the school year. This "culture of reflection" culminates with the creation of a portfolio of student work and completion of a presentation of learning. While the portfolio is a tool that students use during their presentation, they do not simply present the portfolio to their panel. Instead, they use work samples contained in the portfolio to support their claims about themselves as learners.

For example, a student may wish to highlight the fact that she is persistent in her work habits at school. She could show this persistence by sharing work that involves extensive revision, reflection and drafting. Additionally, she might show two pieces of math work both addressing a similar skill. Progress from piece to piece could also serve as a display of persistence in learning.

Students should not simply stand before their panel and present work samples on their own. This is what happens in student-led conferences throughout the year. The presentations of learning are the time for students to explain their overall progress as a learner with supporting evidence in the form of carefully selected work samples.

A student POL might follow this format:

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. An overview of the student's academic year summarizing major learning and personal discoveries
3. Explanation of two positive characteristics as a learner with support from relevant work samples
4. Explanation of one area for growth as a learner with support from relevant work samples
5. A statement of goals for the following years
6. Questions and Answers from the panel