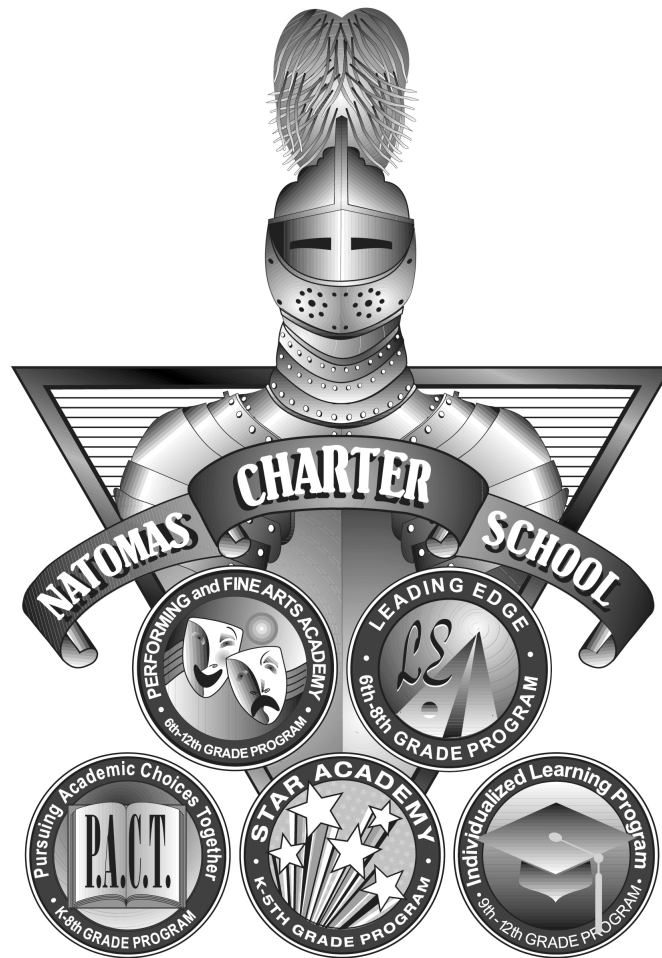


Natomas Charter School Performing and Fine Arts Academy



Middle School Portfolio Handbook

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Why does PFAA Middle School have an 8th Grade Portfolio?

The Performing and Fine Arts Academy Middle School values active and self-reflective learning. As a student getting ready to be promoted to high school, you are required to assemble an 8th grade portfolio to demonstrate your academic achievement, your academic growth and engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation. Components of the portfolio include commentary, self-assessment and carefully chosen work samples completed during your 6th, 7th and 8th grade years. The primary focus of the portfolio is academic work, but we also encourage you to include work from your arts classes. Content of individual portfolios will vary, but these guidelines should help you create an effective representation of your learning and growth. The teachers and staff hope the portfolio process gives you a meaningful way to reflect on your growth and learning experiences. We look forward to learning from your work.

The portfolio incorporates the foundation of Natomas Charter School's educational philosophy: The Expected School Wide Learning Results (ESLRS), which drive the school's mission and vision. The ESLRS articulate specific expectations of NCS students:

- * Have knowledge of and the ability to demonstrate basic skills in reading, writing and speaking, and computation.*
- * Have a repertoire of problem solving approaches, including exploring alternatives to solving the same problem.*
- * Have a basic understanding of technology (including computers, multimedia, and the Internet) and its applications in and outside of the classroom.*
- * Have an understanding of the interconnections between the systems, cultures, and environments of the world.*
- * A core knowledge, which includes cultural literacy, knowledge of humanities, scientific literacy and an appreciation and understanding of the values that constitute the basis of our society.*
- * Pursue continued and active "real-life" learning.*
- * Possess the ability to internalize concepts and apply them.*
- * Possess the ability to think logically and make informed judgments.*
- * Possess appreciation, joy of, and respect for the visual and performing arts.*
- * Possess the understanding that a healthy lifestyle is important to one's well being.*

Through the categories in the 8th Grade Portfolio you will demonstrate how you have achieved these learning results.

What is the timeline to complete my portfolio?

8th Grade portfolios are presented to a panel in the spring of your 8th grade year, but the process for collecting evidence starts in 6th grade. Teachers assist students in collecting their work and pass their work on to the student's 7th and 8th grade subject matter teacher. Failure to present your 8th grade portfolio will jeopardize your promotion into PFAA High School. Do not wait until the last minute to begin thinking about your portfolio. Start planning early so if you have questions or concerns there is time to discuss them with your advisor (8th grade Language Arts Teacher) or Middle School Program Coordinator.

Tentative 8th Grade Schedule:

<i>October</i>	<i>First five pieces signed off by subject matter teachers due to Mrs. Wallace</i>
<i>January</i>	<i>Five more pieces (10 total) signed off by subject matter teachers due to Mrs. Wallace</i>
	<i>Deficiency notices sent home</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>Cover letter due in Language Arts</i>
<i>March</i>	<i>Last four pieces (14 total) signed off by subject matter teachers due to Mrs. Wallace</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Deficiency Notices sent home</i>
	<i>Spring Break</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Binder Due</i>
	<i>Practice Interview in Language Arts</i>
	<i>Interviews</i>

6 th GRADE	
Semester 1	Semester 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hear presentation by 9th graders regarding preparation for the portfolio process (Not 2011-2012, but possibly in the future) Learn about keeping work, classroom storage options and what qualifies as meaningful work Write an art preview reflection every quarter Write two reflections per semester in semester long or year long courses (including 8th Period Classes) Parents will be introduced to the portfolio process and requirements at Boot camp. File small sized projects in Portfolio Folders in the classroom. Store and keep any large project components and nightly homework at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect twice in semester and year long courses (including 8th period) Reflect quarterly in Arts Preview courses Store and keep any project components at home and in the classroom. Conduct an interview in a small group of 6th graders (in homeroom) to demonstrate understanding of your work. In art, reflect on how you have grown as an artist and what you would like your art focus to be. Artistic Statements are returned to Jared at the end of the year.
7 th GRADE	
Semester 1	Semester 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Middle School Portfolio requirements with homeroom teachers. Ensure 6th grade work is in a safe place and that work is stored in the right classroom for each subject. Write two reflections (including 8th Period Classes, and mixed MS HS Classes) File small sized projects in Portfolio Folders in the classroom. Store and keep any large project components and nightly homework at home. Hear 9th graders talk about what they wished they knew about portfolio before they started. (possible for 2012-2013) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write two reflections (including 8th Period Classes, and mixed MS/HS Classes) File small sized projects in Portfolio Folders in the classroom. Store and keep any large project components and nightly homework at home. Answer one of the interview questions in front of the class in each subject. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All 7 questions must be answered in one of the classes. Grade using portfolio mini rubric (Prepared by Wallace) Revise 6th grade Artistic Statement. How has perspective on art discipline changed in one year of instruction? (Turned in to homeroom teacher) In Homeroom, watch a video of a model presentation

8 th GRADE	
Semester 1	Semester 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Middle School Portfolio schedule and plans for 8th grade with ELA teacher. • Make sure 6th and 7th grade work is in a safe place. • Write two reflections (including 8th Period Classes, and mixed MS HS Classes) • Get at least 5 Assignments signed off by Subject Matter Teachers and submit to ELA teacher • File small sized projects in Portfolio Folders in the classroom. Store and keep any large project components and nightly homework at home. • Write rough drafts of Letter of Introduction in ELA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get remaining 9 work samples signed off by subject matter teachers • Write final draft of Letter of Introduction • Assemble all work into binder in ELA • Do practice interviews in homeroom and in ELA • Finalize Portfolio interview answers, using feedback from practice interviews group. • Present and pass Middle School Portfolio

Who evaluates my 8th Grade Portfolio?

The primary audience for your portfolio will be a panel committee consisting of PFAA teachers, Natomas Charter School administrators and may also include community members and parents, who will give the final approval of the Portfolio. As you assemble your portfolio your 8th grade Language Arts teacher will discuss your selections and give you preliminary feedback.

Students practice for this panel interview in 6th grade, 7th Grade, and throughout their 8th grade year. 8th Grade Portfolios will be evaluated to determine that all expectations and criteria have been met, and your portfolio exhibits a quality product. After portfolios have been approved or declined, the Middle School Program Coordinator will notify the students of the panel's decision and, if necessary, require another interview.

In the event that the panel deems portions of the work are incomplete or require revision, the Middle School Program Coordinator will return the portfolio with comments for revision. Your Portfolio Advisor is available for assistance with any revisions.

The portfolio assessment is the final opportunity for students to showcase their learning experiences within PFAA middle school. The panel will consider the student's presentation, and his/her attendance, academic, and disciplinary history. Admittance into PFAA high school is no longer a guarantee, and the panel will decide whether or not the student will be promoted to the PFAA high school program. Students may receive full admittance, conditional admittance (under a separate contract with different stipulations for continued admittance), or denied admittance to the high school PFAA program.

What exactly will be in my portfolio?

Although the portfolio(s) should be expressive of your own uniqueness and individuality, there is a certain prescribed format to be followed. If you plan ahead, stay organized, and save work samples that meet the portfolio criteria, then you will have a higher quality portfolio.

The following is a checklist of all required categories for your 8th Grade Portfolio. Use this checklist throughout middle school to keep track of work samples in various stages of completion. All categories listed are required, unless otherwise stated. You will be required to submit a completed Portfolio Matrix Form in your portfolio.

Portfolio Matrix

You will fill in at least 14 boxes with evidence of how you have met that criteria. At least 2 pieces of evidence for each category (column) and at least 2 pieces of evidence for each subject (row). The row titled "Other" is optional. You are not required to have 2 pieces of evidence for that row, but you may use it if you have evidence that does not fit into a specific subject.

	Growth	Citizenship	Overcoming Challenges	Effective Use of Technology	Problem Solving	Greatest Accomplishment	Goal Setting
The Arts							
Language Arts							
Math							
Physical Education							
Science							
Social Studies							
Other							

Portfolio Categories

GROWTH – Where have you seen your greatest improvement during Middle School?
 Consider increased skills in *writing* (correctness, form, audience), increased skill in *reading* (comprehension, making inferences, understanding main ideas), awareness and use of *technology*, increased skills in *mathematical* concepts and computation, an increased understanding of how *science* is applied to the real world, increased skills in oral and written *communication*,

and in the application of knowledge, principles, and themes learned in the *social sciences*.

CITIZENSHIP – How have you contributed positively to NCS and how can you be an asset to your high school? Evidence can be found in (but is not limited to) homeroom/class meeting work, report card comments, “Got Caught” slips, student of the month, and mentor nomination or other examples of times you have shown yourself to be a responsible, productive member of our school community.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES – What difficulties have you overcome? Possible ideas include your most challenging subject, tough changes at home, changes with friends, adjusting to middle school. Show how you were successful in spite of these challenges.

EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY – How have you used technology to make your work better or express your ideas and emotions? Evidence could be a properly formatted essay, an assignment that used Internet research, a Power Point Presentation, movie, garage band project, or a brochure.

PROBLEM SOLVING – How have you solved challenging problems in middle school? What different problem-solving approaches have you tried? Have you tried different alternatives to solving the same problem? Evidence could be a log of times you went to teacher office hours or assignments where you had a real-life problem to solve, such as projects designed to simulate activities in the “adult” world or think logically to make an informed judgment.

GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT – What are you most proud of from your middle school years? This could be an academic or artistic accomplishment, so bring in your best project, a report card you are proud of, or a program showing your solo in the school play.

GOAL SETTING – Have you reached your goals in middle school? What goals do you have for high school? Show us work where you set and met your goals.

Evidence

At least 14 pieces of evidence

- ✦ Minimum of two pieces of evidence for each subject and each portfolio category.
- ✦ This evidence can be graded work, programs for arts performances, certificates, and report cards. Work may be from another school if the student has transferred during his or her middle school years. These pieces of work will be the evidence to prove that the student has met each category.

2. Arts Demo (either recorded or performed live)

- ✦ Each student will demonstrate his or her passion for the arts. This may be an assignment from an Arts class or it can be an outside piece. This is what continuing PFAA students do instead of an audition, so it should be in the art form you intend to pursue in high school. Students can either perform the piece live during the presentation or show a recording of the piece. This is to be a solo performance. No

other students will be allowed to participate in your performance piece. Visual art is “performed” at a gallery.

Presentation Guidelines

- I) The portfolio may be submitted in the 1-inch binder provided by the student.
- II) All work samples must be accompanied by a brief reflective paragraph, which introduces and describes the sample. The paragraph should state why the sample was selected and how it met the category you entered it under.
- III) Work samples are generally produced on 8 ½” by 11” paper. However, Arts samples and other student work may be larger.
- IV) Please be sure to label entries as such with:
 - A) Your name
 - B) Make sure samples are securely attached to your portfolio binder. See your Portfolio Advisor for further instruction.
 - C) The accompanying introduction/description paragraph should remain in the appropriate portfolio section, and should clearly reference the larger piece.
- V) All Portfolios must follow the order in the Table of Contents.
- VI) Work Samples
 - A) Must be your original work. Additionally, certificates and awards, which are appropriate in some sections, are acceptable.
 - B) Should be legible, easy to follow, and neat.

Required Forms

Cover Letter

The cover letter analyzes the student's middle school experience as a whole. It should include details on the student's experience in the arts, academics, citizenship and his or her vision for the future. This will be given to the panel before the interview.

Table Of Contents

- Create a Table of Contents for your portfolio, using the Table of Contents in this handbook as a model.
- Contents of your Portfolio must be organized in the order indicated.
- The Table of Contents should be one of the last, if not the last, piece of the portfolio you complete.

Portfolio Matrix

- Your advisor will review each work sample you submit as part of your portfolio.
- The Portfolio Matrix will be included in your portfolio submission.
- Submit the original Portfolio Matrix Form. A copy will not be accepted.

Permission to Use Form

In the Appendix of this handbook, you will find the "Permission to Use Form," which you are required to complete. The form gives you two options; you must choose one option.

- Option 1: You agree to allow Natomas Charter School and its representatives to use copies of your portfolio, either whole or in part, as instructional samples. Any use of your work will be anonymous and only for the purpose of providing samples for students in the future.
- Option 2: You **do not** allow Natomas Charter School to use your portfolio, or any part of your portfolio, for any purpose.
 - ✓ Complete and sign the Permission to Use Form after completing your portfolio.
 - ✓ A parent or legal guardian must also sign the Permission to Use Form.
 - ✓ Your Portfolio Advisor must also sign the Permission to Use Form.
 - ✓ Submit the original Permission to Use Form. A copy will not be accepted.

Reflection Form

Name: _____
 ELA Period: _____

8th Grade Portfolio Progress Check Sheet

As you collect your portfolio pieces, have the teacher who assigned the work sign off to approve it. If that teacher no longer teaches at this school see another teacher who teaches the same subject. You must see your teachers **OUTSIDE** of class time **BEFORE** the day your approved pieces are due.

For each assignment, please write a few sentences explaining why you chose it for the given category. Refer to the questions for each category:

GROWTH – How is this an example of your greatest improvement during Middle School? How does this assignment reflect the steps you took to make this improvement?

CITIZENSHIP – How is this evidence of how you have contributed positively to NCS? How can you be an asset to your high school?

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES – How is this piece show the difficulties you have overcome?

EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY – How did you make your work better with technology? How did you use technology to better express your ideas and emotions?

PROBLEM SOLVING – How does this piece show how you have solved challenging problems in middle school? What different problem-solving approaches can you show evidence of? Can you show evidence of trying different alternatives to solving the same problem?

GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT – Why are you so proud of this accomplishment?

GOAL SETTING – Which of your goals does this work represent? Have you reached your goals in middle school? What goals do you have for high school?

October First five pieces signed off by subject matter teachers (due to Mrs. Wallace)
 January Five more pieces (10 total) signed off by subject matter teachers (due to Mrs. Wallace)
 March Last four pieces (14 total) signed off by subject matter teachers (due to Mrs. Wallace)

Columns Filled in by Student		Filled in Teachers
Assignment and Explanation (Minimum of 14 pieces of evidence) How does the Piece of Work Relate to the Category?		Teacher Sign & Date
Growth	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
Citizenship	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
Overcoming Challenges	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
Technology	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	
	Subject: _____ Assignment: _____. Explanation: _____	

Permission to Use for Natomas Charter School Use

I _____ give Natomas Charter School permission

Please ✓ all that
apply

To photocopy some / all of my portfolio components

To scan some / all of my portfolio components and store electronically

All portfolio components will be stored anonymously and may be used as examples for future students.

I _____ do not give Natomas Charter School permission to copy components of my portfolio in any capacity.

Student Signature _____

Date _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Portfolio Advisor Signature _____

Date _____