



Portfolio Defense Guidebook for Students and Families

[Part 1: Overview](#)

[Explanation of the Portfolio Defense Process](#)

[SEEQS Sustainability Skills](#)

[The Basic Structure](#)

[The Portfolio:](#)

[The Defense:](#)

[Timeline Overview](#)

[Part 2: Creating & Defending the Portfolio](#)

[Select Exemplars](#)

[How to choose an exemplar](#)

[Examples of “exemplars”](#)

[Reflect on your skills](#)

[Prepare your Defense](#)

[Basic Requirements of the 8th-grade Defense](#)

[Tips for a Successful Defense](#)

[Make your Case](#)

[How it works](#)

[Who is on your panel](#)

[How you are evaluated](#)

[What happens if you don’t pass your defense](#)

[Things to remember](#)

[Part 3: Supporting Documents](#)

[SEEQS Portfolio Rubric](#)

[SEEQS Defense Rubric](#)

[Some Background on the Portfolio Defense System](#)

Part 1: Overview

Explanation of the Portfolio Defense Process

At various points in a student’s SEEQS career, they will present a portfolio of work that demonstrates progress in their development of the SEEQS Sustainability Skills. They will also deliver a public defense of their progress before a panel, making the case that they are ready for the next stage of their education. This document serves as a guide for creating and defending the portfolio. The [SEEQS website](#) also has a public-facing overview of the portfolio defense process.

SEEQS Sustainability Skills

At SEEQS, one of our core values is Living Sustainably: helping ensure that the planet can continue to support life as we know it for humans and other living species. In order to help create and maintain such a sustainable world, SEEQers are working to master these skills:



Reasoning Analytically

Making judgments based on reasons and evidence

SEEQers face challenges with reason. They break problems into parts that can be named, studied, and understood. They make judgments based not on unexamined opinions but on the review of data and the weighing of evidence.



Thinking Systemically

Seeing patterns, making connections, and designing solutions

SEEQers zoom out after zooming in. They synthesize after they analyze. They apply their knowledge across fields in an attempt to understand the complexities of interdependence. They use design thinking to approach problems creatively as well as critically. They seek solutions to problems and translate judgments into actions.



Collaborating Productively

Working together toward a common goal

SEEQers know how to work in teams, recognizing that the important projects and problems of the world cannot be undertaken or solved alone. They know how and when to lead and follow. They delegate to maximize efficiency and individuals’ strengths. They seek input from all involved, both to gain trust and to broaden perspective. They work to ensure that the sum of group effort is greater than its individual parts.



Managing Effectively

Finishing what you start, with effort, organization, and care for quality

SEEQers understand that to live sustainably is to live with focus and discipline. They divide large tasks into concrete, manageable steps. They meet deadlines. They seek feedback to improve quality, and they allow time for revision.



Communicating Powerfully

Expressing yourself so that others understand

SEEQers tailor their communication to its context. They consider what their audience needs and expects—clarity and craft chief among them. SEEQers organize their ideas and select the medium that best serves their message. When they express, they show that they've also been listening.

The Basic Structure

The portfolio-defense system is divided into two main parts: 1) the portfolio and 2) the defense.

The relationship between the portfolio and the defense is similar to the relationship between a resume and a job interview. The resume describes what you can do on paper, and it can be reviewed independently, ahead of time and without you in the room. The job interview, in contrast, is a live event, providing the opportunity for you to expand upon what's in the resume, and for the interviewer to learn things about you that cannot be communicated on paper.

Similarly, the portfolio and the defense are related but distinct. Once the portfolio is assembled, it can be viewed by an assessor anywhere, anytime. The defense is a live event before a panel of evaluators.

The Portfolio:

In the portfolio, students present and reflect on already-completed work that offers observable evidence of their understanding of how to apply the SEEQS Sustainability Skills. The portfolio will contain five pieces, or excerpts, of work—we will call them *exemplars*—each one *chosen by the student* to represent one of the five Sustainability Skills:



- Reasoning Analytically
- Thinking Systemically
- Collaborating Productively
- Managing Effectively
- Communicating Powerfully

In addition, exemplars must also represent the range of disciplines that students have developed at SEEQS.

For each of the five exemplars, students write a reflection—known as a Sustainability Skills Portfolio Reflection (SSPR)—that explains in detail how the work demonstrates understanding of and growth in that Sustainability Skill.

Details on how to choose exemplars and how to write reflections come later in this guidebook.



The Defense:

The defense is a live event before a panel of evaluators. Students make the case that they are ready to move on to the next level – in this case, ninth grade. As with any argument, evidence must support claims. In this case, students cite evidence from their portfolio.

Based on the strength of the student’s presentation, the panel—which includes SEEQS teachers, community members, and at least one fellow student—makes a decision that the student has passed or that they have room for improvement and need to make another attempt.

What it takes to pass will not be a mystery. A rubric that details what is expected is included in this guidebook. Teachers and advisors will work with students and help practice the defense presentation. With proper preparation, the defense is not a challenge to fear but a celebration of hard work and something to look forward to.

More detail on what to defend and how to defend it comes later in this guidebook.

Timeline Overview

The following quarterly breakdown shows how students will gradually prepare for and build up to their 8th-grade portfolio defense presentations. 8th-grade families can support their students throughout this process by familiarizing themselves with this timeline and guidebook, attending the 8th-grade parent meetings, and following along with all correspondence from SEEQS regarding their 8th graders' experiences.

QUARTER	MAIN EVENTS
<p style="text-align: center;">Q1 (Aug - Sept/Oct)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome Back to SEEQS Night (pre-year) ● Night in the Life of a SEEQer (first few weeks)
<p style="text-align: center;">Q2 (Oct - Dec)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 8th grade parent meeting about overall Portfolio Defense process & High School (mid Q2) ● Three (3) 8th grade work sessions (during Wednesday long advisory) to get started on the 8th grade portfolio defense process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduce process ○ Choose Mentors ○ Start Portfolios & SSPRs (Sustainability Skills Portfolio Reflections)
<p style="text-align: center;">Q3 (Jan - March)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 8th Grade Portfolio Defense Elective course begins <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ students receive guided class time to write five SSPRs and display them in a polished digital portfolio ● 8th Grade CampCamp Experience (start of Q3) ● 8th grade parent meeting about Portfolios and High School (end of Jan/beg of Feb) ● Optional weekend writer's workshops to receive support on SSPRs (throughout Q3) ● Portfolios Due (last day of Q3) ● Portfolio Assessment Feedback received via email (during Spring Break) ● Students start outlining Portfolio Defense Presentation (during Spring Break)
<p style="text-align: center;">Q4 (March - May)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Portfolio Re-Assessments as needed (start of Q4) ● 8th Graders draft, practice, and finalize their Portfolio Defense Presentations (with support from elective teachers, Advisors, mentors, & family) ● Students & families receive the Portfolio Defense Presentation schedule (mid Q4) ● Portfolio Defense Presentations (end of April/ early May)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Portfolio Defense Re-Presentations as needed (early May)• Graduation preparation (mid May)• Graduation Ceremony (end of Q4)
--	--

Part 2: Creating & Defending the Portfolio

The SEEQS portfolio defense process is a big undertaking!

There are four key steps to creating and defending the portfolio:

1. Select exemplars
2. Reflect on the skills
3. Prepare the defense
4. Make your case!

The next section of this guidebook walks through each of these steps in detail.

As you consider the steps, keep in mind that the SEEQS education is designed to get you ready for this. As long as you stay on top of your work, you have many reasons to feel prepared:

- In each course, you have the opportunity to document and reflect on your work (through Sustainability Skills Reflections, or SSRs), so you have actually been building your portfolio all along!
- You practice your presentation skills constantly as a SEEQer, in your classes and through your EQS projects, so you will have a lot of practice for the public speaking part.
- Each semester, you host a Student-Led Conference (SLC), where you present your collection of work to your family and advisor. The portfolio defense is an extended version of SLCs.
- Your teachers, advisor, and peers will offer you support all along the way.

1

Select Exemplars

The basic building block of a SEEQS portfolio is a piece of your work—something you created or significantly contributed to. You need to select five of these, one for each Sustainability Skill. Because each work serves as an example of your application of a particular skill, it is known as an *exemplar*.

Much of the work for this first step has already been done. During your career as a SEEQer, you have been maintaining a digital **collection** of your work in Google Drive and Altitude Learning. In your courses, you’ve created “Sustainability Skills Reflections” (SSRs) to document this journey. Your collection has served as a running brainstorm of ideas—work that you *might* consider putting in your portfolio. Now your collection contains more than you need for your portfolio. So this first step is about making decisions. This being said, it *may* be appropriate for you to choose a meaningful experience that you’ve had outside of SEEQS if it connects strongly to one of the Sustainability Skills.

How to choose an exemplar

It is important to understand the purpose of an exemplar in an 8th grade SEEQS portfolio. The purpose is *not* to prove mastery or showcase perfection. Of course, you want to be proud of the work you select for your portfolio. Your exemplars will usually be impressive. But exemplars don’t have to represent your best work; sometimes, your best work is not the best choice. Rather, the purpose of each exemplar is to:

1. **demonstrate your personal understanding** of the Sustainability Skill
2. **serve as evidence** of your strengths and weaknesses in that Sustainability Skill
3. provide a **window into how you’ve grown** in that Sustainability Skill

What makes the above possible is not an exemplar by itself, but an exemplar teamed up with a written reflection (more on that in Step 2). For that reason, the best advice for selecting an exemplar is this:

Choose work that will allow you to reflect thoughtfully and deeply on your experience and how it relates to the sustainability skill.

A well-chosen exemplar is one that . . .

- represents a turning point in your growth
- changed your perception or deepened your understanding of a Sustainability Skill
- has a good story you can tell about its creation: for example, overcoming a challenge or experiencing a moment of realization

- is complex, containing both strengths and weaknesses
- gives you a lot to talk about

Other criteria for selecting exemplars

In addition to tying an exemplar to each of the five Sustainability Skills, you must make selections that come from the range of your work at SEEQS. Therefore, remember that . . .

- At least one exemplar must come from a **STEM** (Science, technology, engineering, or Math) course or a STEM-based EQS project
- At least one exemplar must come from a **humanities** course (English Language Arts or Social Studies) or a humanities-based EQS project
- At least one exemplar must be or come from an **Arts** course or an arts-based EQS project
- (That leaves two exemplars that can come from fields of your choice, possibly including an exemplar from outside of school)

Examples of “exemplars”

Here are some examples of the kinds of work you might select for your portfolio, organized by Sustainability Skill:



Reasoning Analytically

Making judgments based on reasons and evidence

One of your exemplars must show evidence of your understanding of/ ability to gather evidence to analyze in depth. Possible examples:

- Analysis of data collected and conclusions drawn during a scientific investigation (in science or EQS)
- Thematic analysis of a text (claim, evidence, reason) which references literary devices
- Analysis of graphs or equations to determine which represents the “best” choice for a given situation
- Written analysis of an unknown artwork that demonstrates your ability to locate it as an object within a specific time and culture
- Written argument that summarizes your perspective on an event or idea based on relevant and accurate sources and evidence



Thinking Systemically

Seeing patterns, making connections, and designing solutions

One of your exemplars must show evidence of your understanding of/ ability to synthesize. Possible examples:

- EQS project in which you connected a specific *local* environmental concern with a *global* issue/phenomenon
- Project that was informed by the creation and analysis of a systems map to show how multiple issues are interconnected
- Artwork that demonstrates your awareness of its influences (with reflection on your techniques, grounded in your knowledge of art history)
- Project or complex problem in which you used content knowledge combined with evidence of connected issues to design an analysis of or solution to a given problem



Collaborating Productively

Working together toward a common goal

One of your exemplars must show evidence of your understanding of/ ability to collaborate. Possible examples:

- Product you co-created with peers in EQS or any other class
- Lab report that demonstrates how your team worked together to complete all the necessary components of the investigation
- Cohesive and meaningful artistic composition (visual or performative) that synthesizes contributions from all group members
- Co-written song with strong compositional elements
- Rubric co-created with a partner to peer-assess in preparation for a presentation
- Video of a productive literature-circle



Managing Effectively

Finishing what you start, with effort, organization, and care for quality

One of your exemplars must show evidence of your understanding of/ ability to manage yourself. Possible examples:

- EQS daily planner that demonstrates detailed, accurate evidence of your long-term project work
- Video project that includes narrative, storyboard, shot-list, and finished footage
- Evidence of how you directed classmates for a scene, including rehearsal schedule and blocking plot

- Work that demonstrates how you went through multiple steps of the design process toward a final product, meeting deadlines along the way (ex: writing a story in ELA, modeling and creating a science rocket, drafting and completing an art project, creating and revising a floor plan, etc.)
- Science or Math (or other course) notebook table of contents that shows continued upkeep and organization



Communicating Powerfully

Expressing yourself so that others understand

One of your exemplars must show evidence of your understanding of/ ability to communicate with skill. Possible examples:

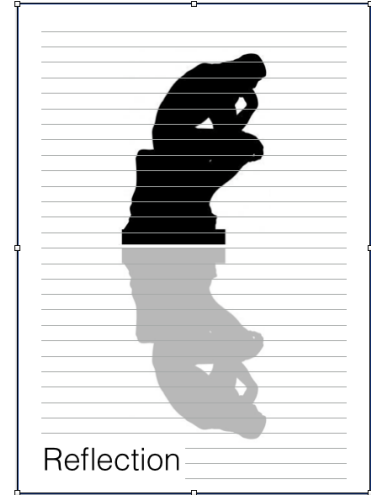
- Artistic performance that includes visual, verbal, and physical decisions relevant to your specific “character” and audience
- Feedback provided to a peer that explains how the work’s intended message was received and suggestions for improvement (could include screenshots of Google doc comments)
- Creation and performance of an original script, speech, spoken-word, etc.
- Evidence of your professional communication and collaboration with a community expert (email thread, interview, etc.)
- Artwork that uses intentional components to communicate a message relevant to the needs of your community (ex: PSA, wearable art/costume, sculpture, installation, painting, artist book, etc.)

2

Reflect on your skills

For each of your selected exemplars, there must be a written reflection that explains why that work was chosen for that Sustainability Skill and how it demonstrates your understanding of and growth in that Sustainability Skill. In your reflection, you should:

- Reflect on your understanding of the Sustainability Skill & how you have grown in it through your SEEQS career.
- Introduce and contextualize the exemplar. Where is it from? What process did you go through to create it?
- Analyze the exemplar, explaining in detail how the particular Sustainability Skill is demonstrated, or explain how it is a counterexample of that skill.



In many ways, this step is the most important. Your portfolio defense is an argument for your readiness to move on, and it is in your reflections that your argument is being made. Plus, much of the thinking that goes into your reflections will help you in making your oral defense (the next two steps).

Fortunately, you are not always starting portfolio reflections from scratch. You should begin with the reflections that you wrote back when you reflected on these projects initially (in the form of SSRs).. *But you are expected to do rigorous expansion, development, and revision of these original reflections.*

Faculty and staff will use the portfolio rubric (linked below) to assess your portfolio. They will use this rubric to communicate to you how you are doing in the development of your portfolio and descriptions of your Sustainability Skills. The feedback you receive will help you make any necessary changes to your reflections before you begin to prepare for your defense. This will ensure that your defense presentation is based on a solid foundational understanding of the Sustainability Skills.

3

Prepare your Defense

Once you have completed and passed your portfolio, you can turn your attention to preparing for your defense, which is an oral presentation you will make to a panel. As discussed earlier in this guidebook, your portfolio and your defense are related but distinct. While your portfolio

offers a general overview of your understanding of the Sustainability Skills, your defense answers a more specific question:

How can the SEEQS Sustainability Skills help me fulfill my kuleana to be a "steward of planet earth and healthy, effective citizen of the world"?

In order to answer this question, your defense should draw from evidence in your portfolio, but *you should not cover everything that is in your portfolio*. For one, you won't have time within the 15 minutes you have to speak. More importantly, repeating what is in your portfolio won't answer the question above.

Remember, the panelists to whom you make your defense will have seen your portfolio, reviewed your exemplars, and considered your reflections beforehand. At your defense, they are looking for you to say things that go beyond your portfolio, to tell the story of what you have learned, how you have grown, and how you have lived up to the responsibility of being part of the SEEQS community.

Basic Requirements of the 8th-grade Defense

- Runs from **12 to 15 minutes**
- Answers the question**, "How have I developed as a "steward of planet earth and healthy effective citizen of the world" during my time at SEEQS?"
- Refers to **at least two different Sustainability Skills** by referencing **at least two exemplars from your portfolio**
- Is supported with **visual imagery** (which can be projected with presentation software) that helps to communicate your message

Tips for a Successful Defense

- Be specific. Put your work, your skills, and your contributions to the SEEQS community under a magnifying glass. When you cite evidence, take time to really present and explain it.
- Talk about how you've grown as a contributor to the SEEQS community. Stories of growth are compelling to audiences because their honesty invites trust. Cite evidence of your growth by comparing points in time.
- Learning experiences that changed your perspective or attitude always make for powerful stories. A great technique for defense is to explain how you arrived at a new and deeper understanding of community or a particular Sustainability Skill.
- Don't hesitate to include additional evidence from outside of your portfolio if it helps you to make your case.
- Be creative! Use this opportunity to prepare visual materials and a format that showcases your personality and makes the defense personal and engaging.

4

Make your Case

In late spring (April/May), you will defend your portfolio before a panel of evaluators.

This is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to design a coherent and engaging presentation, to confidently engage an audience for a sustained length of time, to speak extemporaneously, and to listen and respond to questions. You should inject some creativity into your presentation.

It is also an opportunity for the panel to ask you to elaborate on what is in your portfolio. You will need to answer questions that *won't* necessarily be provided to you ahead of time. This is why it's important to select work that you care about and know deeply.

How it works

Your defense will be scheduled for a 45-minute time slot, during which you will stand at the front of a room and make your presentation with your supporting visual imagery. The 45 minutes will break down as follows:

Your presentation	12-15 minutes
Q&A with the panel	10 minutes
Panel deliberates	10 minutes
Feedback & wrap-up	10 minutes



Who is on your panel

You will make your presentation to a panel of evaluators. Their job is to review your portfolio beforehand, listen carefully to your defense, ask you questions during the question-and-answer session, assess your performance with the rubric, and provide you with feedback on your strengths and areas for growth.

Your panel will be comprised of the following:

- one or more SEEQS teachers
- one or more community members
- at least one fellow SEEQS student

How you are evaluated

Your evaluators will measure your performance with two different rubrics (linked later in this section). As mentioned in section 2 above, you will receive feedback on your portfolio before you move on to preparing your defense. Your defense panel will review your portfolio along with the feedback you received on it before they come to watch your defense.

The panel will also use a rubric to measure the quality of your defense itself. This rubric will measure the content of your presentation, the evidence you are able to provide, and the quality of your presentation skills.

After your Q&A session, you will leave the room, and the panelists will discuss your performance and reach consensus on your success relative to the defense rubric.

At the end of their deliberations, the panelists will invite you back into the room. After giving you detailed feedback on the strengths and areas for growth in your presentation, the panelists will let you know whether or not you passed your defense.

What happens if you don't pass your defense

If you do not pass your defense, you will be asked to re-present. You will be given a chance to make improvements to your presentation, based on the feedback you have received, and you will try again.

If you do not pass your second attempt, you will have the opportunity for a third try, at a time to be determined with your teachers.

Not passing is of course disappointing but is by no means the end of the world. Many accomplished students have been asked to resubmit their defense. Those who attend to the feedback and suggestions for improvement almost always pass on their second attempt. Most students who re-submit feel proud of the improvements they've made and ultimately view the whole experience as a valuable learning opportunity.

Things to remember

Overall, as you embark on this portfolio defense journey, keep in mind that this entire process was created as a chance to learn and practice important life skills. The goal is not to create a perfect portfolio or defense right away, but instead to engage in a valuable self-reflective process. Your peers, teachers, and community members are here to support you through each step so ask for guidance, believe in yourself, and remember that what you put into this process will determine what you get out of it. We can't wait to see what you create!

Part 3: Supporting Documents

SEEQS Portfolio Rubric

SCORING DOMAIN	SEEQS Portfolio Rubric			
	STARTING	SHIRING	SUCCESSING	SOARING
REFLECTION Student can demonstrate deep understanding of the Sustainability Skills and has taken responsibility for growing in them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections indicate a basic awareness of the Sustainability Skills Reflections contain some self-assessment regarding Sustainability Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections indicate an understanding of the Sustainability Skills Reflections identify student's relative strengths and weaknesses in Sustainability Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections reveal a personalized understanding of the Sustainability Skills Reflections show how the student has taken conscious responsibility for growing in the Sustainability Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflections reveal a personalized understanding of the Sustainability Skills Reflections show how the student has taken conscious responsibility for growing in the Sustainability Skills
EVIDENCE Student can deliberately select and organize examples of work to show understanding and growth in the Sustainability Skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are chosen that reflect minimal understanding of the Sustainability Skill Examples are explained Claims are made, more supporting evidence needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are chosen that reflect basic understanding of the Sustainability Skill Examples are explained Claims are generally supported; not always sufficiently or convincingly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are carefully chosen to show Sustainability Skills in action Examples are analyzed Throughout portfolio, claims are consistently supported with evidence that is visible in examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examples are carefully chosen/selected to show how Sustainability Skills have evolved Examples are evaluated Claims are supported with sophisticated evidence
RAFT Student can arrange his/her portfolio so that it is clear, organized, and aesthetically pleasing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio elements are presented simply, but links and relationships between items are unclear Some pages contain usable/useful headings and labels Student chooses aesthetics that largely Aesthetics that do not enhance the content OR no effort is made to address aesthetics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio is navigable and has suggested menu set up Most pages have usable/useful headings and labels Student demonstrates know-ledge and control of tools, media, techniques, style, and integrity in workmanship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Portfolio is organized and easy to navigate All pages have usable/useful headings and labels Portfolio presents an authentic trajectory of growth in learning, (take the audience on a journey of learning?) Attention to detail provides a seamless connection/writing of iteration, revision, and exemplar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual elements are comparable to professional work in design Student designs own template for portfolio Portfolio presents an authentic trajectory of growth in learning, (take the audience on a journey of learning?) Attention to detail provides a seamless connection/writing of iteration, revision, and exemplar
CONVENTIONS Student can clearly and effectively communicate in writing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors in grammar, word usage, and mechanics distract from the content Items are indistinguishable from each other Main ideas are broad and/or difficult to identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text includes some distracting errors in grammar, word usage, and mechanics Transitions connect one clear idea to the next Sentences are complete, but not varied in structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grammar, word usage, and mechanics serve the content Transitions contribute to the flow of ideas Text demonstrates varied sentence syntax and effective word choice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student is able to utilize appropriate and professional language while Writing is carefully crafted to have seamless transition and an overall cohesiveness Text demonstrates complex syntax and effective word choice, and effectively uses rhetorical techniques

SEEQS Defense Rubric

SCORING DOMAIN	SEEQS Defense Rubric				
	STARTING	SHIRING	SUCCESSING	SOARING	
CONTENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter's understanding of Sustainability Skills does not match what is communicated in his/her portfolio Evidence is minimally drawn upon or inaccurately cited A lack of organization makes it difficult to follow the presenter's ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter's understanding of Sustainability Skills has inconsistencies with what is communicated in his/her portfolio Evidence is cited to support claims, though inconsistently or insufficiently Presenter has structure, but room for greater organizational clarity (e.g. transitions, sequencing, conclusion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter's understanding of Sustainability Skills matches what is communicated in his/her portfolio Evidence is consistently and accurately cited to support claims Presentation is logically organized, with good use of transitions and attention to audience expectations (e.g. intro, body, conclusion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter's understanding of Sustainability Skills matches what is communicated in his/her portfolio Evidence is carefully chosen and skillfully cited to make convincing claims Presentation demonstrates rhetorical craft (e.g. an engaging introduction, a creatively sequenced body, effective transitions, and/or an insightful conclusion) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presenter uses the opportunity to enhance what is communicated in his/her portfolio Evidence is carefully chosen and skillfully cited to make convincing claims Presentation demonstrates rhetorical craft (e.g. an engaging introduction, a creatively sequenced body, effective transitions, and/or an insightful conclusion)
ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes minimal use of presentation skills, including body posture, language, eye contact, voice and timing Uses language that is unsuited to the occasion and audience Responses to the questions are vague and demonstrate a minimal command of the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes partial use of presentation skills, including body posture, language, eye contact, voice and timing Uses language that is at times unsuited to the occasion and audience Responses to the questions are limited and demonstrate a partial command of the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates a command of presentation skills, including body posture, language, eye contact, voice and timing Uses appropriate language that is suited to the occasion and audience Responses confidently address the questions and demonstrate a command of topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates consistent command of presentation skills, including body posture, language, eye contact, voice and timing that keep the audience engaged Uses sophisticated and varied language that is suited to the occasion and audience Responses to questions are thoughtful, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates consistent command of presentation skills, including body posture, language, eye contact, voice and timing that keep the audience engaged Uses sophisticated and varied language that is suited to the occasion and audience Responses to questions are thoughtful, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the topic
VISUAL AESTHETICS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids distract from or confuse the message Visual aids are hard to comprehend Visual aids generally ignore learned principles of design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids generally align with the message Visual aids are generally clear but would be more effective with more precision and preparation Visual aids do not take full advantage of learned principles of design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids serve the message Visual aids are consistently clear and demonstrate attention to detail Visual aids demonstrate learned principles of design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids serve to increase audience engagement Visual aids demonstrate learned principles of design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual aids serve to increase audience engagement Visual aids demonstrate learned principles of design

Some Background on the Portfolio Defense System

The SEEQS Portfolio Defense is based on a tested model developed by Envision Education, in collaboration with education researchers at Stanford University.

Schools that have designed and implemented some version of a portfolio defense system benefit from transformative changes to school culture, student identity, and organizational awareness. Among the benefits, a portfolio defense system can . . .

- ensure that a school focuses on what it most values
- provide clear targets for a school in developing the vital life success skills that transcend particular academic disciplines
- allow students to make sense and tell the story of their education, seeing it not as a collection of credits but as a multi-year project toward a unified end
- culminate the hard work of learning with an equally powerful rite of passage, much deeper and more substantive than what graduation ceremonies provide
- increase parental and community involvement in a school
- promote teacher collaboration
- help a school community to self-assess and to reflect on its progress toward its goals
- embody a school's mission in actual student performances.