

SENIOR PORTFOLIO AND DEFENSE

COMMUNITY HEALTH ADVOCATES SCHOOL (CHAS)

Overview

At the end of 12th grade, you will present a portfolio of work that demonstrates you have developed the skills and knowledge, accomplishing what is expected of an LAUSD and CHAS graduate. You will also deliver a public defense of your portfolio before a panel, making the case that you are ready for the next stage of your education.

What's Expected of You

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

The Portfolio

Your portfolio will contain **5 required documents**, **3 artifacts** of your work, and **3 reflections** (one for each artifact). All will be uploaded to ConnectEd Studios. The required elements of your portfolio are divided into three categories, as follows:

5 Required Documents:

1. Personal Statement
2. Resume
3. Service Learning Project Reflection
4. Career Cruiser Verification
5. Community Service Hours Verification



3 Artifacts

Artifacts are examples of your work that demonstrate your skills and your college and career readiness. Each artifact will be *chosen by you* to represent your readiness to graduate from high school and how you embody the CHAS Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). You must include 3 artifacts. Each artifact must focus on a different SLO.

3 Reflections

You must write a reflection about each artifact explaining how it demonstrates your growth and learning.

The Defense

The defense is a live event before a panel of evaluators. You make the case that you are ready to move on to the next level — graduating from high school. As with any argument, you must cite evidence to support your claims. In this case, you cite evidence from your portfolio.



Based on the strength of your presentation, the panel—teachers, administrators, community members, mentees and/or industry professionals—makes a decision that you have passed or that you 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 of you is included in this handbook. Your teachers will work with you and help you to practice your defense. If you have properly prepared, then your defense is not a challenge to fear but a celebration of all your hard work and something to look forward to.

How to Create and Defend Your Portfolio

In your Advisory, you will have an opportunity to upload to www.connectedstudios.org:

1. Your required **5 documents**.
2. Your **3 artifacts** and **3 reflections**.
3. Your **presentation for the Defense**.

1. Required documents (5)

#1 – Personal Statement

Gaining college access

Your personal statement is more than just an essay you can submit to colleges. It's a reflection on who you are as a learner, what your journey has been, and what all this means for your future.

#2 – Your Resume

Finding your career path

Including your resume in your portfolio is a sign that you are ready to seek employment.

#3 – Service Learning Project Reflection

Demonstrating your commitment and service to your community

The Service Learning Project Reflection about identifying a problem in your community, taking action to create change, and reflecting on the impact in your community.

#4 – Career Cruiser Verification

Finding your career path

Including your Career Cruiser Verification in your portfolio is a sign that you have recognized your interests/skills and thought critically about your future career.

#5 – Community Service Hours Verification

Demonstrating your commitment and service to your community

Including your Community Service Hours verification shows one way you have given back to your community through volunteering your own time to help others. In addition to verifying that you've completed your hours, you must also write a 1-page typed reflection of one of your community service experiences. Answer the questions: Who was impacted by your service? How? How did this service impact you?

2. *Select your artifacts (3)*

As a high school student, you are preparing for your portfolio-defense every day, in your coursework and in your projects, so you have opportunities all year and throughout your years at CHAS to collect evidence of your growth and your readiness to move on.

Your first step is to choose your artifacts- examples of your work that demonstrate your skills and your college and career readiness. Each artifact will be *chosen by you* to represent your readiness to graduate from high school and how you embody the CHAS Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). **Your must include 3 artifacts. Each artifact must focus on a different SLO. At least one artifact must come from 9th-11th grade.**

CHAS Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are:

Health Advocates

- Identify the various types of health (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, and environmental)
- Create and organize a campaign to improve health
- Connect client to appropriate health services
- Apply concepts of oppression and marginalization to advocate for human rights and social and economic justice.
- Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior, appearance, and communication
- Demonstrate empathy

Critical Thinkers

- Explain the disparities amongst communities as they relate to health issues
- Gain self awareness of personal bias
- Analyze and investigate situations to come to ethical decisions
- Recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create or enhance privilege and power.

Collaborators

- Create and deliver group presentations with peers and professionals
- Manage a peer mentorship caseload
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication in working with individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities and colleagues.

- Consult with peers and professionals to draw conclusions
- Demonstrate empathy
- Formulate policies for social well-being

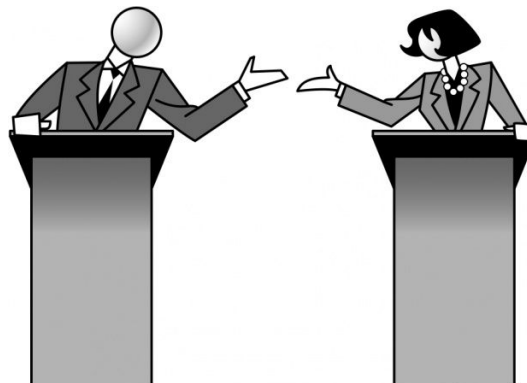
Researchers

- Conduct community asset mapping
- Distinguish between and integrate multiple sources of knowledge
- Investigate multiple sources and points of view, and cite evidence
- Use researched evidence to inform practice

Artifacts:

At CHAS you have worked really hard, so you have a lot to choose from.

- intergenerational interviews
- literary analysis essay
- historical research paper
- presentation in any subject area
- science lab experiment or report
- student-designed scientific experiment
- analysis of a work of art
- community health issue analysis
- position paper on a controversial issue
- book or art review
- formal speech/debate
- science-based editorial
- lifestyle disease project
- performance in a government debate
- letter or proposal to an elected official
- student-designed historical research paper
- thesis paper on an author or literary period
- art portfolio
- revolution children's book
- genogram
- interdisciplinary projects
- statistics experiment and analysis
- internship final presentation
- mentorship case study



3. Reflect on Your Artifacts

For all artifacts, you will write a reflection that analyzes the work and explains, in detail, how and why it demonstrates your skills and your college and career readiness. In many ways, this step is the most important. Your portfolio-defense is an argument for your readiness, and it is in your reflections that your argument is

being made. Much of the thinking that goes into your reflections will help you in making your oral defense. **Since you have 3 artifacts, you must write 3 artifact reflections of approximately 1 typed page in length.** In your reflection, you should:

- Introduce and contextualize the artifact. Where is it coming from? How did you create it?
- Analyze the artifact, explaining in detail how it represents your understanding of a specific Student Learning Outcome (SLO).
- Reflect on how your growth and development for that SLO, and what progress you still need to make.

4. Senior Defense

Once you have completed your portfolio, you can turn your attention to preparing for your Senior Defense, which is an oral presentation you will make to a panel. You have been practicing your presentation skills constantly as a student at CHAS, in your classes and through your projects, so you don't need to be nervous about the public speaking aspect of the Senior Defense. That said, you should rehearse your final Senior Defense to ensure you have the best possible presentation.

As discussed earlier in this handbook, your portfolio and your defense are related but distinct. While your portfolio offers a general overview of your skills and your college readiness, your defense answers a more specific question:

How am I college, career, and community ready?

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 10-15 minutes you have to speak. More importantly, repeating what is in your portfolio won't answer the question above.

At your defense, the panelists 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 your school.

Basic Requirements of the Defense

- 10 to 15 minutes
- Student must show evidence of both growth and graduation-readiness by referencing at least 2-3 artifacts from the portfolio.
- Your PowerPoint or Prezi should be mostly visuals and bulleted key points.
- The majority of your presentation is verbal.

Suggested Presentation Template

1. Title Page
2. Biography/Background Page
3. Identify SLO, provide overview of artifact #1 and identify growth
4. Identify SLO, provide overview of artifact #2 and identify growth
5. Identify SLO, provide overview of artifact #3 and identify growth (optional)
6. Provide an overview of learning and growth at CHAS
7. Next steps for future
8. Closing/Thank you slide

Tips for a Successful Defense

- Be specific. Put your work, your skills, and your contributions to the your 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 your community. Stories of growth are compelling to audiences because your 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 SLO.
- Don't hesitate to include additional evidence from outside of your portfolio if it helps you to make your case.

How the Defense Works

In 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, 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 the portfolio. You will need to answer questions that won't be provided to you ahead of time. This is why it's important to select work that you care about and know deeply.

Your defense will be scheduled for a 30-minute time slot, during which you will stand at the front of a room and make your presentation with your supporting visual imagery. The 30 minutes will break down as follow:

Your presentation	10-15 minutes
Q&A with the panel	5 minutes
Panel deliberates	5 minutes
Feedback & wrap-up	5 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 weaknesses.

Your panel will be comprised of teachers, administrators, community members, mentees and/or industry professionals

How you are evaluated?

The panel will also use a rubric to measure the quality of your defense. This rubric will measure your preparation and the quality of your presentation skills.

After your Q&A session, you will leave the room, and for five minutes the panelists will discuss your performance and reach consensus on how to score you on 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 weaknesses of your performance, 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 are asked to "resubmit." You will be given a chance to make improvements to your presentation, based on the feedback you have received, and you will try again within 1-2 weeks.

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 resubmit feel proud of the improvements they've made and ultimately view the whole thing as a valuable learning experience.