April 7th 2019

Dear OESIS Member School:

<u>OESIS Significant Partnership Announcement with Portfolium</u>

An important partnership announcement today is behind new OESIS solutions that can impact your academic program, co-curricular initiatives, admissions process, college interactions, teacher professional development and the views of your families on the kind of student equity you provide as an institution. These are bold claims so let us explain how.

**Who is the Partner?** OESIS has partnered with [Portfolium](#), a company with more than 4 million student users (from Kindergarten to College) and clients that include [3,600 colleges and public schools](#): their solutions are not currently in use at independent schools, particularly due to the upfront and ongoing costs.

**What is the [OESIS- Portfolium solution](#)?** Portfolium is both a student e-portfolio and a 21st century assessment/recognition application: the e-portfolio is a student/parent controlled private life-long collaborative repository of their learning journey; the assessment module is a set of customizable skill pathways based on performance requirements and milestones; recognition of mastery or growth or excellence is based on school-defined rubrics, competencies, skills or standards and rewarded with badges or (mastery) credits towards pre-requisites. Both the e-portfolio and the assessment/recognition solutions sync with any school's student information and learning management systems. OESIS has developed multiple applications for these solutions along with collaborative enhancements- see below.

**What is the OESIS rationale?** We believe in skills and competencies and understand the barriers to shifting mindsets from external ranking to internal merit. This is a 21st century assessment solution that can be implemented immediately and incrementally without changing the traditional grading paradigm. It sits astride your current platforms and syncs when allowed by the student or parent and school. If you want to start with a pilot in a department, grade level, division or a co-curricular program like robotics, entrepreneurship, service learning, or fitness, Portfolium fits all of these use cases. It is totally private and in the hands of the student to control. Our member schools (including those exploring mastery grading AND those determined not to) still believe in fundamental skills, the need to give students agency over their work and recognition of excellence. With our knowledge of skills, competencies, PD and innovation, OESIS believes we can be the perfect partner in onboarding our schools.

**How can this affect your College Admissions?** As a school, you can provide College reps who serve your schools with Talent Search Accounts: these accounts are under your control with OESIS to enable, allow College Reps to request connections with your high school Juniors or Seniors and provide a page for that College to be followed by your students for the purposes of visits and registering their interest. Although in-school College counselors have pushed back at the mastery movement because it entails a more detailed transcript without traditional grades, this solution provides an antidote for recent practices: the publicized scandals underline the need for equity for all students in the college process, one they can have more control of and beyond the traditional legacy advantages; most importantly, one that presents a picture of the whole child. Unlike a transcript, this showcase of student skills can be for them a social network solution, validated by their teachers and peers to the degree they desire. Imagine a College looking to balance their admitted pool, which could quickly search into portfolios (of public and private school applicants) by skill that are following them, then dig deeper to see the skill validation levels, evidence and more!

**How can this affect your Middle & High School Admissions?** Leading independent schools' enrollment management associations agree that the admissions funnel is broken because applications appear last minute from potential families doing their research outside of traditional open house and other activities. Engaging inquiries and prospects earlier in the process is key. Equally, putting the student more in the process (but with continued parent oversight) is not something that application processes have gravitated to achieving: parents drive the process today in virtually all areas except standardized tests. An e-portfolio will give students the ability to showcase their interests and talents using technology they hardly need to be taught and a process of networking that is as natural to them as breathing. We have two solutions that give schools a choice of how to use this. If we are setting up an e-portfolio for your current students, we can add to your walled garden an exclusive area for your school applicants to build their portfolios. A lower cost network solution for you is for your applicants instead to pay for their own access. We are building such an Admissions Hub for all 2000 + independent schools (member and non-member OESIS schools) and their applicants. Available this summer for 2019-2020 admissions season, we believe it will become an alternative to the standard application solution. Hub participating schools will have their own pages, can search for applicants in their area, invite them to connect, see their accomplishments, projects and more when they do connect, and offer them ways to interact. By providing stealth inquiries and prospects an earlier way to connect from their websites, too, they are building important engagement earlier. Pathways or requirement submissions offered within the Hub could also be used to exempt applicants from parts of the regular application process as an incentive.

**How can this help our Professional Development for teachers?** The assessment and badging solution can also be used for teachers. OESIS has built the largest repository of innovation content for teachers at independent schools. Our member schools can now take that content a step further with this partnership. They can issue PD pathway badges on their own with their school brand to their teachers based on requirements and milestones that they have identified, are evaluated by themselves (lowest cost) or by our network (higher cost). We will train our member school PD leaders and department or division leaders how to set these up AND advise

them on content strategy - it is quite simple. They can also encourage their teachers to do Pathways badges that OESIS Network Leaders have developed (in PBL, SEL, CBE and more) and that we will evaluate in the same way we offer cohorts (higher cost). These badges consist of digital repositories of skills with supporting evidence. A network solution to PD is fundamental for affordability and tactical perspective.

**What does this cost?** OESIS membership as a school is the best value ticket for independent schools and each of these e-portfolio solutions have member advantage pricing and terms. Our partnership recognizes that independent schools are small and can scarcely afford typical multi-year installations of the scale of Colleges and public schools districts. This partnership enables us to offer schools pilots, lower cost entry pricing and onboarding strategic counseling. Please use this link to arrange a meeting time.

I am also happy to announce that Joel Backon, currently Director of Academic Technology at Choate Rosemary Hall (CT) joins us full-time on July 1st to lead the partnership applications relating to school academic and co-curricular offerings and Teacher PD applications. He has been at Choate for 27 years with key roles in Information Technology, Academic Technology, classroom teacher, curriculum designer, and academic and student life advising. He has been an OESIS Network Leader since 2015, and I value his instincts and perspectives. I will manage the College placement and Admissions applications.

This is an exciting time at OESIS. We understand your growth issues and need for realistic solutions at all levels, as any truly national innovation association or network should. We invite you to learn more and benefit from the grass-roots movement that is OESIS.

Best.


Sanje Ratnavale
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OESIS Group