

# A Making Learning Visible Menu

## For Going Public with Documentation

### *A Few Notes about Menus*

*...You can't order everything on the menu...Some people start with dessert and some start with antipasti...Menus change...*

### *Antipasti*

1. At the beginning of each school year, review existing school-community relationships and local or regional events and initiatives and identify connections with the curriculum.
2. When teaching, make comments to students about what you notice about *how* they are learning. When grading, share a quote or provide an observation about students' process of learning.
3. When you notice a positive moment or a provocative or insightful comment or question in your classroom, take a picture and write it down. Share it back with the class and use as a regular reference point.
4. Include a daily or weekly reflection time at the end of class where students share the main thing they learned and one question that emerged, or ask students to think about how they shared ideas or learned something from other students. Start a list of how students help each other learn.
5. Read a chapter in *Making Learning Visible* or *Making Teaching Visible* or a related article and hold a discussion with teachers and parents.

### *Primi*

1. Share a visual essay with your class and facilitate a conversation about the strengths and challenges of learning in groups. Document the conversation and post excerpts in the room. Use as a common reference point.
2. Audio or video record a small group working on an academic task and share excerpts. Ask students to comment on how they are working together as a group. How do they share ideas or help each other learn?
3. Train students (and others) on digital equipment to document learning in the classroom. Ask a student 'documenter' to take observational notes or photographs about how the group is learning together, which are shared back with the group. Invite student teachers, parents, or aides to help document.
4. Facilitate a conversation at an Open House about the visibility of learning: Do you think of learning as visible? Never? Always? Sometimes? If so, where would you focus a camera, or when would you turn on a tape-recorder, or otherwise try to "capture" the learning that you see?
5. Show Ben Mardell's *Learning is a Team Sport: Kindergartners Study the Boston Marathon* DVD to parents, teachers, and students and solicit questions and comments.

## *Secondi*

1. Make students' and teachers' learning *process* visible in displays or presentations of student work. For example, post photographs along with your own or students' reflections about learning at science fairs, plays, art exhibits, open houses, family breakfasts, multicultural celebrations, or other community events.
2. Pair interested teachers to document in each other's classrooms and share their discoveries at a grade-level meeting or with students or families.
3. Post documentation of student learning on the walls or in other formats (brochure, video, the Web) to share with the school community and prospective families.
4. Identify a common overarching understanding goal or theme for the school (e.g., "What does learning (or "listening") look like?"). Host a schoolwide or public event to share what different grade levels or subject areas learned.
5. Host learning walks for teachers, students, or the community to look for evidence of individual and group learning.

## *Dolce*

1. Find a partner school and hold occasional exhibitions of student and teacher learning (processes and products) to which you invite the other school.
2. Create and display a timeline of learning or a "Thinking Wall" with compelling, provocative, or surprising moments of individual and group learning.
3. Display children's thinking publicly at relevant locations (e.g., theories of how washing machines work at the Laundromat, or how food gets to the supermarket at a grocery store, or how bicycles work at the bus station).
4. Hold an exhibition of student and teacher learning processes and products at your local library, museum, community center, or town hall, and facilitate related panel discussion or structured conversation.