































Portfolio & Defense System: Possible Implementation Timeline

	Action Item	Led by?	Timeline
Before School Year Begins			
	School team decides on the Driving Question that students will answer through their Defense. This DQ should be mapped to the Graduate Profile.		
	Defenses are put on master school calendar, and placed as a culminating assessment, with enough time for students to revise and to try again if necessary		
	Exhibitions or other public presentations are put on master school calendar so that students who are not defending get ample opportunities to practice		
	School-wide shared rubrics are established and/or revised if necessary. All teachers are familiar with rubrics, and map their curriculum backwards from these.		
	Teachers map out year-long curriculum to track what artifacts will be assigned and when, with an eye toward insuring that students have enough opportunities to demonstrate the skills of the Graduate Profile through their work		
	Systems for tracking student progress are established, and all staff members understand who owns which pieces of the Portfolio & Defense process		
Fall Semester			
	Launch and orient Portfolio & Defense with relevant groups of students and parents		
	Lead teacher presents Portfolio & Defense process to staff		
	PD on calibrating student work for the portfolio using school-wide shared fleet of rubrics to measure Grad Profile skills and inform instructional and curricular decisions		
	Students across all grade levels are being given multiple opportunities to present their learning in class, via an exhibition, etc. and being assessed on shared presentation rubric		
	When students present, they are instructed as to what professionalism looks like in presentation, are given models of what the school community means, and are expected to fulfill these expectations		
	All teachers have assigned at least 1 aligned task (aligned to Graduate Profile skills) that a student could include in her portfolio and defense		
	Defending students have collected a certain number of artifacts in their portfolio; their progress is tracked by the relevant staff member (content teacher, advisor, admin, learning specialist etc.)		

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	Students are beginning to think about which artifacts from their collection of possibilities they might choose to defend.		
	List of benchmark deadlines for Spring Semester as well as all portfolio & defense rubrics and vital tools have been distributed to relevant student groups/families, and hung up around the school		
Spring Semester			
	Defending students begin to craft the overall thesis of their Defense, addressing the Driving Question in their own way		
	Defending students select the artifacts that best support the overall thesis of their Defense, and make sure those artifacts are approved by teacher or advisor, if necessary		
	Defending students explore, unpack, and assess model artifacts & defenses in order to reach a shared understanding of what a high-quality defense looks like and sounds like		
	Progress trackers for defending students are visible and public so that student progress is celebrated by and accountable to the wider school community		
	Students and teachers utilize the systems and structures for differentiation, modification, and interventions needed to insure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet requirements		
	All staff at the school participate in Professional Development for calibration on the assessment of the defense. The calibration should begin with videos of student defenses and culminate in a live student who is defending early.		
	Defending students sign up for defense slots once they have completed the required benchmarks, and invite family, friends, supporters whom they would like to be in the room.		
	All defending students are presenting drafts of their defense presentation for feedback from their peers, teachers, advisors. Rehearsals of partial or full defense presentations should be required before the official defense		
	Defense panels are assembled (including any outside community members or industry experts), check calibration, and remain intact for the duration of the defense presentations		
	Defending students present their defenses to a calibrated panel, audience, and their invited guests		
	For defense days or weeks, all participants - students and adults - should be upholding professional dress and behavior expectations. The school should look and feel like it is “buzzing with high expectations” all around		

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	<p>Defense panels go through an evidence-based protocol to determine if a student passes, or has to resubmit her defense. That decision is delivered with clear and specific feedback for all students.</p>		
	<p>Time is already calendared for at least 1 round of re-submissions for those students who do not pass on the first try, and additional individualized support and plans are made for those who need to revise again</p>		
	<p>Students who pass their defenses are publicly acknowledged in some way - special cords at graduation, a ceremony during school, certificates on the wall, etc.</p>		
	<p>School community reflects on the portfolio & defense experience in terms of quality, data, and alignment to the Graduate Profile. These reflections inform planning for the following year on every level of the school</p>		