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Assignment 6

Grading and Reporting

The focus of the grading and reporting system should be the improvement of student learning and development. This is most likely to occur when the report clarifies the instructional objectives, indicates the student's strengths and weaknesses, provides information concerning the student's personal-social development, or contributes to the student's motivation. Day-to-day assessments of learning and feedback from tests and other assessment procedures best improve student learning. It is important to inform parents or guardians of their child's school progress in a basic grading/report system function (Miller, 2013). These reports can help parents understand the school's objectives and how well their child is achieving the intended learning outcomes of the particular program. The report should not be extensive in length and should be filled with many details. The book offers a wonderful example of this being supplemented for parent-teacher conferences at the elementary level.

Grades and progress reports serve a number of administrative functions. Most importantly, they are used for determining promotion and graduation, awarding honors, determining athletic eligibility, and reporting to other schools and prospective employers. Guidance counselors also use these reports to communicate and make realistic educational and vocational plans. The reports are usually a singular letter grade when seen at the administrative

level. There are some doubts that the convenience of a single letter grade is retarding the development of more comprehensive and useful reports.

With all of that information on grading and reporting systems, there are different types that you can implement. For starters, there is the traditional letter-grade system which most of us are familiar with. This is A, B, C, D, and F, which is concise and convenient. The grades are easily averaged and are useful for predicting future achievements. The next is the pass-fail system which means you either passed the class (satisfactory). Or, you did not pass the class, which would result in an unsatisfactory. Another system is a checklist of objectives which can just be a list of things needed based on your subject. Another example is a portfolio of student work where students can choose what to be showcased and what they think is their best work. Finally, there are parent-teacher conferences and letters home where you can communicate with parents about how their children are doing.

There are multiple guidelines for developing a multiple grading and reporting system. First, the development of the grading and reporting system must be guided by the functions to be served. The information needed by the report users should be included. Next, parents, students, and personnel should develop the grading and reporting system cooperatively. School reports are apt to be useful when all users help develop. Another reason is that the grading and reporting system should be based on a clear statement of educational objectives and consistent with school standards. Finally, the grading and reporting system should be detailed enough to be diagnostic yet compact enough to be practical. Other people have to read this; it is important that it makes sense for non-educational people.

Finally, record-keeping and grading software are important. Grade books have been a familiar part of teaching for decades. I remember teachers pulling them out and writing my grades down. However, things have changed, and there are now many digital options. My school has a program for us called conferring notebook where we can take down information about grades. We also use Genesis to put in our grades, and it keeps track of them through the marking period. It is important you find a program that works best for you and your teaching style.

Standardized and Informal Tests of Achievement

Standardized tests have certain distinctive features, including a fixed set of test items to measure a clearly defined achievement domain. We should carefully construct and include a few characteristics for these times. To start, the test items are of high technical quality. They have been developed by my test specialists and are selected based on difficulty. Next, the directions for administering and scoring are so precisely stated that the procedures are standard for all users. Next, equivalent and comparable forms of the test are usually provided, as is information concerning the degree to which the forms are comparable. Finally, a test manual and others accessory materials are included as guides for administering and scoring the test.

Standardized tests and carefully constructed classroom tests are similar in many ways. Both of these are based on a table of specifications, providing clear directions to students. The goal is to have students produce a clear answer, and the teacher/test administrator should be able to score it. However, there are some differences between the two types. To start, the nature of the reliability of the tests is different. Several (informal tests) appear to have sufficient reliability for lower stakes decisions such as selection of classroom reading materials, but not for higher stakes purposes such as identification of reading difficulties (Spector, 2005).Next, the quality of the test

items can be different. This goes along with the first difference. Standardized tests are widely given and scored where, whereas the teacher creates and grades informal classroom tests. This can cause a difference in the reliability and quality of the test.

Similarly, there are many goals that both tests make useful. Evaluating students' general educational development in basic skills and outcomes common to many courses of study is the first. Developed properly and used responsibly, standardized tests can help students gauge their progress and help the general public assess the effectiveness of schools (Atkinson, 2001). Next, evaluating student progress during the school year or over years. Another goal is to compare students' general level of achievement with their academic aptitude. It is also useful for determining students' strengths and weaknesses in broad subject or skill areas.

It does have some inflexibility which can make it less valuable for those purposes. For example, evaluating the learning outcomes and content unique to a particular class or school. Not every school can use the same tests if it does not align with their standards. Next, evaluate students' day-to-day progress and achievement on work units of varying sizes. Finally, evaluating the knowledge of current developments in rapidly changing content areas such as social studies and science. These programs are quick to change in districts, and creating tests that are district-wide can be difficult since they are time-consuming.

There are hundreds of tests designed to measure specific areas of achievement. The majority can be classified as tests of course content or reading tests. A limited number also have been developed for use in determining learning readiness. One disadvantage of separate tests is that each is usually standardized on a different group of students. Norm groups are not comparable, and the relative achievement of students in different areas cannot be compared.

Cautions Interpreting and Using Learning Ability Scores

1. Allow for normal variation in the test scores

2. Seek the causes of low scores

3. Verify test results by comparison with other information

4. Use the test results to improve learning

5. Be cautious in identifying students as underachievers

References

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