Standards-based assessment paper course work examples

Technology, Development

\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

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Introduction

Most institutions are adopting standards-based assessment as part of the reforms in education. Standards-based assessment refers to determining the performance or outcomes of a student based on pre-determined standards (McMillan, 2008). The first thing in this assessment is setting new and high standards that every student should meet. The next step involves aligning the curriculum to the standards and finally assessing the students to find out if they meet the standards. This reform aims at assessing the students based on a set standard, which each student can meet rather than ranking all students where some students are seen as failures. Standards-based assessment eliminates the achievement gap and introduces new ways of assessment. This paper describes the standards-based assessment grading criteria, reporting tools, and reporting forms. The paper also gives suggestions on ways to improve the current practices.

Grading criteria

The grading criterion in standards-based assessment focuses on the ability of the students to meet the set standards. The criterion determines if the students learnt and achieved the stipulated standards. Unlike the traditional assessment and grading methods, standards-based criterion uses common standards for all students. It does not compare the performance of a student with that of others, but with the expected standards. There are three broad categories of determining the grade of students. The first is the product, which involves the student's overall performance and specific achievements based on project examinations or final reports (Brookhart, 1991). The next is process, which grades a student according to the daily progress. This process may include classroom behavior, class participation, punctuality, or work habits. The final criterion is progress, which determines how far a student has come in learning experiences. Overall, these criteria should continually evaluate the tests of the student based on the set standards. Teachers, students and parents should have sample assessment criteria to determine if the student meets the standards.

Reporting tools

Most schools have different tests that their students take in order to find out if they meet the pre-determined standards. The tests determine the strengths and weaknesses of the students so that they can take the necessary measures to improve performance. After assessing the students, it is necessary for an institution to have a clear guideline of reporting the findings to the respective stakeholders. These include the teachers, the

parents and the students. An institution can use reporting tools such as school newsletters, websites or teacher's notes among others. These reporting tools make the results of the tests useful and relevant to the various stakeholders (Guskey & Bailey, 2001). The school's newsletter and teacher notes report the results and show areas that the student needs to improve. Having this knowledge on the areas of the tests that require improvement provides necessary information to curriculum makers to improve it. They can get the information easily from the websites and take necessary steps.

Reporting forms

There are various formats of reporting the results from a standards-based assessment. These forms include report cards, progress reports and state testing reports. Most educators use the report card to give an account of the standards. The report card begins with the educators identifying the standards that students should meet at each grade level. Next, the educators determine how to measure the achievement of a particular standard by a student. Then the educators determine the benchmarks for attaining the standards and finally the report card should communicate the teacher's opinion on the progress of the student. The report card should be uniform based on specific and quantifiable learning standards. A uniform report card ensures that grades and achievement of standards are complementary (Brookhart, 1991). States, schools and districts are also embracing the progress reports that determine how far a student has come

in achieving the set standards. It reports the student's progress in learning experiences.

Ways to improve current practices

The standards-based assessment movement is still new and most schools and educators are yet to embrace it. To improve the current practices, it is important for educators to shift from traditional assessment to standards-based assessment (McMillan, 2008). The assessments should be intrinsically motivating to students and encourage them to improve their performance. They should also lead to increased accountability to teachers, students and parents in an effort to improve current practices. The standards-based assessments should also emulate the new curriculum reform so that they are at par with the expectations of educators. In addition, these assessments should develop the staff involved in implementing them. The staff should grow and learn new ways of improving the performance of their students from these assessments. In addition, the assessments should evaluate a student on real life situations so that they can prepare the student well in life after school.

Conclusion

Standards-based assessment is a new reform in the education sector. It aims at assessing students based on a predetermined standard unlike the comparing student's performance with that of others. The grading criteria focus on the ability of the student to meet expectations. The reporting tools determine the strengths and weaknesses of a student in a given area. The report card is a common reporting form that should be uniform to eliminate

bias in the assessment. The assessment should engage students in real life situations as a way of improving current practices.

References

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