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### Philosophy of Curriculum and Assessment

Grading can be the most dreadful and most rewarding part of teaching. The actual teaching is the fun part. Having to do work that is not fun can be daunting. Put aside the negative aspects of evaluating and the teacher can see some amazing results. With 15, 20, maybe even 30 students in my classroom, I may not notice if they understand or not. It may take an assignment, project, or even a conversation to say, “Wow! They are understanding what I am teaching!” There is nothing more satisfying then when you see that light bulb go off. I get excited and then the student gets really excited. My goal for assessment to to monitor if what I’m doing is working and if the students understand the content. As Rick Stiggins said in *Assessments Through the Student’s Eyes*, “Rather than sorting students into winners and losers, assessment for learning can put all students on a winning streak.”

There are four different assessments that I will use in the classroom to accurately assess student learning. The first two are a pre and post test. The pre test allows for the teacher to see what students already know or what the students might need extra time or help on. The data can serve for individual students or even the class as a whole. The post test shows the teacher if they got the content down or not. If they did not understand the content then the post test shows where reteaching is needed. The third form of assessment is formative. This can range from simply observing the students to doing worksheets. I personally am convinced that the teacher will see

the most accurate results from knowing his or her students and observing what they do. Hence, formative will be my main form of assessment in my classroom. The last form of assessment is summative. This can be a test, project, paper, or anything that can demonstrate student learning on an entire unit.

Feedback is crucial to aid student learning. It helps the student monitor their own learning and progress. The teacher first needs to give feedback on how well or not so well that the student knows the content. The student needs to know what they need to do in order to know the content. This might stem from the teacher reteaching or simply having to pay more attention. When giving feedback, the teacher needs to form it in a positive but constructive manner. Not only do students need feedback on their knowledge of the content but also how they are applying that knowledge to their work and performance. The feedback then needs to be administered in the same way either in verbal or written form on the assignments. Feedback is a newer concept for me as a teacher and it is way more than simply saying, “good job.” Saying “good job” tells the student nothing. They need to know exactly what they are doing a good job and how they should either continue it or improve it.

Teachers need to set appropriate standards for his or her students. Those standards can be shown in all the students by their understanding, knowledge, and mastery. The teacher has done everything he or she can do if the student is to the mastery step of learning a specific content. It is that time when I will step in and help them mold their craft whether it's in math, reading, or even art. I want all my students to be at the mastery level but that is an unrealistic goal. Some students will excel at one subject and struggle with others. This basic concept is the result of why

people have different passions once they get to college. With that said, if a student is struggling, I will still hold them to the standard of understanding the concept.

Not only do I expect a lot from my students, but I also expect a lot from myself. I have high standards and will do my best to live up to those standards. In order to do that, I need to constantly evaluate myself and ask, “Are they understanding?”, “What can I do to help the students understand?”, “What do I need to change?” These are all questions and many more that I will ask myself everyday. My standards are set to where the students learn, understand, and apply it to their own lives. If the student can demonstrate what they know either through verbal questioning, essays, projects, test, general observation, and many more testing strategies, then my job is not done, but on the right track.

An important aspect in evaluation is student evaluation. They need to know if they are on track without me having to tell them. This has proven to help students be more motivated and even learn better. If a student can motivate themselves without any other incentive, then they should retain the information longer and not to just ‘get by.’ This does not magically happen. I will have to guide the students through monitoring their progress and by demonstrating it myself. In the beginning of the year, the students will most likely need reminders and tips on what they need to do. By the end of the year, my goal is to have them knowing exactly where they are at and where they might need improvement in.

The actual evaluating portion of grading is different for every teacher. I want to end up in the younger grades so standards based grading seems to be the most effective. I will not be grading anything in my class. I will be giving myself scores to go by but when it comes down to giving a grade, I will grade based on everything that they do in my class. I will be grading every

subject but within that subject are categories. For instance when I grade language arts, I will evaluate the students reading foundational skills and within that category will be *fluency*. I will give the student a 3 (exceeds), 2 (meets), 1 (below). Since I have decided to grade this way, when it comes to missing or late work, I will not ‘dock’ points. I will simply expect them to do it even if I have to sit down with them. Homework shows a portion of what they know and do not know. If I instill that concept into my students minds, I believe I will not have a problem with students not completing homework. I also will not assign very much. The younger grades can get homework done in class for the most part. This way I can really see if they understand.

Like Rick Stiggins said, the goal of education is to help everyone learn. If the students are not learning what the teacher is teaching, then something needs to change. This change can be noticed by all the forms of assessment that the teacher is doing. If a teacher is not assessing and evaluating his or her students, then they are doing themselves a disfavor but also the students.

Works Cited

Ascd. "Assessment Through the Student's Eyes." *Educational Leadership: Educating the Whole Child: Assessment Through the Student's Eyes*. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.