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CO-TEACHING IN CLINICAL EXPERIENCES: STUDENT TEACHER TRANSITIONS

Abstract:

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 in the United States mandated standardized testing to measure student achievement. Over time, this act began close scrutiny and criticism of curriculum and instruction. As schools struggled with meeting the mandate, Race to the Top, a \$4.35 billion United States Department of Education contest, was created in 2009 to spur innovation and reforms in state and local district K-12 education. States were awarded points for satisfying certain educational policies, such as implementing performance-based standards for teachers and principals, complying with Common Core standards, turning around the lowest-performing schools, and building data systems. In order to apply for this competitive grant, school districts had to demonstrate a systematic evaluation of teachers' performance through their students' achievement. This initiative has led to mandated teacher evaluation systems that include one component tying student test scores to teacher performance. With teachers' yearly evaluations now being tied to student test scores, district administrators are weary of supporting student teachers in their schools. A way to allow teachers to continue to have a teaching presence with a student teacher placement is through co-teaching. This method of instruction allows the mentor teacher to collaborate with the student teacher in various instructional strategies. Committed to making co-teaching an integral part of our clinical practice, our faculty members trained in the co-teaching model and, in turn, trained student teachers, mentor teachers, principals, and college supervisors in the model. We will share the principles of co-teaching and their first efforts at co-teaching Spring 2014. We will explain why we adopted this model and how we formed partnerships with school districts. We will share what we learned, what curriculum changes we made, the assessment instruments we used, and our next steps. Finally, we will share the findings of a research study. This study included three in-depth interviews with six mathematics and social studies student teachers and their mentor teachers to study their perceptions of co-teaching.

Keywords:

Reference Jane Wilburne