

Evaluation Plan

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Introduction

In this world where testing is king, schools are always trying to find creative ways to increase student achievement. The Barrow County School (BCS) System is no different. This year, BCS hired a new superintendent, and she brought a new innovation with her. This program charges teachers with focusing their classrooms around feedback, differentiation, and assessment (FDA). At principals meetings, the superintendent often reviews the following materials, all distributed by the Georgia Department of Education: *School Keys* (2007), *GAPSS Analysis* (2007), and an *Implementation Resource* (2007). Each of these manuals contains tabbed sections that include information about feedback, differentiation, and assessment. These resources serve as the backbone to the FDA initiative. This evaluation is going to focus on the implementation of feedback and assessment. The evaluator will focus on whether or not teachers are utilizing feedback and assessment in their classroom and how the use of feedback and assessment are improving student achievement.

Prior to the creation of this evaluation plan and evaluation questions, a literature review was completed to ascertain the current trends and research regarding feedback and assessment and how they are used in the classroom. There are many studies that tout the benefits of using feedback and assessment in the classroom to raise student achievement. As much as teachers want to help students succeed at self-assessment, "accurate self-assessment may be an unrealistic goal" (Sergeant, Mann, & VanDer Vleuten, 2008). Teachers have to help students learn to self-assess. Fluckiger, Tixier y Vigil, Pasco, and Danielson (2010) researched the use of student-centered feedback. They used four strategies which would allow students the opportunity to learn from the feedback given. Each of the four methods, "three color [quizzes] with feedback on the process, product, and progress; midterm student conferencing; shared revision of student generated questions and statements; and timely feedback using collaborative assignment blogs" (Fluckiger, et al., 2010), provide the student with specific feedback to help enhance his or her understanding and learning. Each of these four strategies "provide[d] scaffolding

for [the] learners ... and involve[d] students as partners in assessment” (Fluckiger, et al., 2010) and resulted in an increase in student achievement.

Going hand-in-hand with feedback, assessment is an additional critical component in helping to raise student achievement. Merely giving assessment is not enough – the results of both summative and formative assessments should be considered to gauge student learning and understanding. Additionally, these results should be utilized when lesson planning (Feldman, 2010). Many school systems, BCS included, have implemented benchmark and standards-based assessment, as promoted through the *Implementation Resource* published by the Georgia Department of Education (2007, p. 33), as a way to “align and adjust instruction to maximize student achievement.” The *Implementation Resource* (2007) goes on to state that, through the analysis of the “summative data for [the] students, performance targets are ... established to address student needs and desired outcomes” (p. 34).

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation is to identify whether the implementation of the feedback and assessment components of the county’s FDA initiative have been successful at Winder-Barrow Middle School. The evaluation will focus on how teachers are utilizing feedback and assessment in the classroom and whether they are seeing improvements in student achievement. The evaluation will be a formative evaluation which will provide the client with an initial snapshot of how well teachers have embraced FDA in its first year of implementation. After viewing the results of the evaluation, the client will be able to ascertain how well teachers are using feedback and assessment as tools for guiding the instruction.

Evaluation Questions

The goal of this evaluation is to determine if the feedback and assessment components of the county’s Feedback-Differentiation-Assessment (FDA) initiative are being effectively implemented into the classrooms at Winder-Barrow Middle School. This leads to the following evaluation questions:

Prime Questions:

1. Are the principal, school, and county seeing the desired results through the implementation of feedback and assessment?
2. Are teachers utilizing feedback and assessment as a way to guide their instruction?

3. Would the teachers like to see additional support from administration in how to use feedback and assessment in the classroom?

Secondary Questions:

1. What results are the principals and county seeing as a result of the implementation of feedback and assessment in the classroom?
2. How are teachers using feedback and assessment to guide their instruction?
3. What further support can the administration provide to teachers in order for teachers to feel that they are successfully implementing the feedback and assessment components of FDA?

Methods

Participants

All teachers at Winder-Barrow Middle School will participate in this program evaluation.

Design and Procedures

The following activities are designed to help answer the evaluation questions:

- The participants will complete an initial survey (Appendix A) that will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The survey will be created based on the Prime Questions stated above. After the completion of the survey, the evaluator will have a better idea of where the faculty is with the use of feedback and assessment in the classroom. The data will be interpreted with the evaluation questions in mind.
- After the completion and compilation of the survey data, the evaluator will compile follow-up questions similar to the Secondary Questions above in order to gain a deeper understanding of the faculty's use of feedback and assessment. The evaluator will then utilize these questions when conducting a focus group, compiled of teachers from various grade levels and contents. Again, this data will be taken into consideration when answering the evaluation questions.
- The data will be compiled and presented to the client.

Instruments

- *Qualitative and Quantitative Survey:* The evaluator will create a survey that is both qualitative and quantitative in design. The survey questions will be created using the above Evaluation Questions

as a guide. This survey will be hosted through GoogleDocs. After the participants have taken the survey, the evaluator will collect the data and review it to create follow-up questions.

- *Focus Group Interview:* The evaluator will create follow-up questions that will be used with the focus group. These questions will be created after the completion of the GoogleDoc survey. The evaluator will facilitate the focus group by asking questions and taking notes about the responses.

Data Analysis

- *Survey:* The evaluator will review the answers to the survey to look for trends and patterns within the responses. She will also compile the data in a way that provides quantitative and qualitative data to report back to the client. The questions answered with a Likert scale will be averaged to determine the average teacher's response. The responses that are qualitative in nature will be compiled, grouping the data by the types of responses – positive vs. negative, constructive vs. criticism, etc.
- *Focus Group Interview:* After the survey responses have been reviewed, the evaluator will create follow-up questions. A focus group will be created to allow the evaluator to compile data that is specific in nature. After the completion of the focus group session(s), the evaluator will analyze and group the data based on common trends.

Conclusion

We live in a world where educational decisions are often made based on the results of standardized tests. Counties across the state and country are constantly trying new programs to increase the test scores of their students. As indicated in the previously completed article review and the introduction, feedback and assessment are extremely effective in increasing student achievement. BCS is no different. The county has invested a lot of money, time, and energy in the implementation of the FDA initiative. Each individual component is a research-based strategy for improving student achievement. The evaluator, upon completion of the data collection, will be able to provide the client with information that will help to enhance the FDA experience for the teachers.

References

- Feldman, E. (2010). Benchmarks curricular planning and assessment framework: Utilizing standards without introducing standardization. *Early Childhood Education*, 38, 233-242. Retrieved from Eric (at EBSCOhost).
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- Georgia Department of Education. (2007). *GAPSS analysis: Georgia assessment of performance on school standards: Closing the gap*. Atlanta, GA: School Improvement Services.
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- Sargeant, J., Mann., K., & VanDer Vleuten, C. (2008). "Directed" self-assessment: Practice and feedback within a social context. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 28(1), 47-54. Retrieved from Eric (at EBSCOhost).

Appendix A



Feedback - Differentiation - Assessment

This year, Barrow County Schools has implemented an initiative targeting Feedback - Differentiation - Assessment as ways to increase student achievement. Ashley Bailey and Erica Boswell are working to evaluate this initiative as a component of their Program Evaluation Course at the University of West Georgia. Please fill out the following survey about the FDA initiative. All responses will be kept anonymous. Thank you ahead of time for your participation.

* Required

How would you rate the quality of the Professional Development provided this year in the area of Feedback? *

1 2 3 4 5
 Poor Excellent

How would you rate the quality of the Professional Development provided this year in the area of Differentiation? *

1 2 3 4 5
 Poor Excellent

How would you rate the quality of the Professional Development provided this year in the area of Assessment? *

1 2 3 4 5
 Poor Excellent

How often have you used assessment as a way to drive your classroom instruction? *

(Have you used your assessments (formative or summative) as ways to change possible instruction?)

1 2 3 4 5
 Almost never Almost always

How often do you give individualized feedback to students? *

(either written or verbal)

1 2 3 4 5
 Hardly ever Daily

How often are your lessons differentiated to meet different learning needs? *

1 2 3 4 5
 Hardly ever Daily

Has your knowledge of differentiation been evident in student learning? *

(Please answer this question based on the Professional Development opportunities provided this year.)

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- I have not implemented differentiation strategies in my classroom.

Appendix A (cont.)

How would you rate the knowledge of your current students as compared to students in previous years? *

- Comparable
- This year's students are doing better.
- This year's students are doing worse.

How would you rate the administration's support in the implementation of the following strategies? *

	1	2	3	4	5
	I feel very little support from the administration on a day-to-day basis.		I feel that the administration has enabled me to begin using these strategies.		I feel that the administration has provided more than enough support and am able to implement these strategies effectively.
Feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differentiation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please describe any challenges that you face when implementing differentiation.

Would you be interested in participating in a focus group regarding the implementation of FDA? *

We will meet with the focus group for approximately an hour one afternoon to gather additional qualitative data. (Snacks will be provided!)

- Yes
- No

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Survey can be accessed at the following site:

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en&pli=1&formkey=dGdUdEZLU1d2RXdHT0h3YUI6SG54UUE6MQ#gid=0>

Data Collection Organization Matrix

Questions	Related Results	Level (i.e. Mega, Macro, Micro)	Data Source	Data Collection Tools/ Procedures	Data Collected By (Date)	Primary Responsibility
<p>Prime Questions:</p> <p>Are the principal, school, and county seeing the desired results through the implementation of feedback and assessment?</p> <p>Are teachers utilizing feedback and assessment as a way to guide their instruction?</p> <p>Would the teachers like to see additional support from administration in how to use feedback and assessment in the classroom?</p>	<p>Teacher confidence in the use of feedback and assessment</p> <p>Increase in student achievement</p> <p>Principal will be able to determine what is needed to continue the implementation of FDA into the 2010-2011 school year</p>	<p>Micro, Macro, and Mega</p>	<p>Google Doc Survey</p>	<p>Data will be collected in a spreadsheet.</p> <p>Teachers will complete a brief survey (Appendix A), hosted through Google Docs.</p> <p>The data will allow the evaluator to determine trends and receive quantitative data.</p>	<p>March 18</p>	<p>Erica Boswell</p>
<p>Secondary Questions:</p> <p>What results are the principals and county seeing as a result of the implementation of feedback and assessment in the classroom?</p> <p>How are teachers using feedback and assessment to guide their instruction?</p> <p>What further support can the administration provide to teachers in order for teachers to feel that they are successfully implementing the feedback and assessment components of FDA?</p>			<p>Focus Groups</p>	<p>After the evaluator has analyzed the quantitative data obtained through the survey, focus group questions will be developed to help the evaluator better understand the “Why’s?” and “How’s?” of the data.</p>	<p>March 25</p>	<p>Erica Boswell</p>