

Stay@School

Workshop on Module 4 “Educational Evaluation and early school leaving prevention”

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Minutes

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Minutes /

Assessment is an important feature in reference to any educational process, but we consider that nowadays it should not only be understood as the value given to the academic knowledge that a student has acquired. We think we should also take into account the active participation and interest from students. As for the teacher, he / she must perform a continued procedure of data collection as well as information concerning to the student's daily work.

There are many definitions of evaluation and all of them have a positive and a negative side. At our school, we try to choose the best points of each type and adapt them to the educational needs, both group and individual needs, in which we evaluate not only the final result, but also the process in order to check the suitability of them.

The first step to assessment is that the teacher is aware of the skills, attitudes and needs of each student, as this knowledge will allow him/her to decide what the most appropriate type of intervention will be in order to prevent early school leaving / school drop out.

At our school, teachers together with tutors hold some meetings at the end and at the beginning of each educational stage transition (e.g. from early childhood education to primary- students are aged 6- , from primary to secondary first cycle – aged 11, from first cycle secondary to second cycle secondary – aged 13) . These meetings have great value for us as they provide useful information about our new



year's students concerning to knowledge, skills, attitudes or needs . In this way, it is much easier to plan the curriculum as well as the systems and criteria of evaluation.

Among the types of assessment, observation becomes a powerful weapon of evaluation, although it is difficult due to the amount of students who are in the same classroom. Therefore, direct observation must be used with caution and always supplement it with other types of evaluation, because with just observation, we can fall into the subjectivity and would not be a valid process from the educational point of view and to prevent dropout. When we detect a possible case of school drop-out, we must act with the appropriate intervention to prevent that abandonment. In this way, we think it is also important to assess the teaching-learning process based on the procedures.

Assessment must also be continuous, so that teachers are able to identify and assess the students's efforts, identify the negative aspects that hinder their learning, and propose ways to overcome them. When students learn through procedures, they see how step by step the process of teaching and learning is enriched and valued by the teacher. We do not rely on a final result that terrifies them so much. Thus, the motivation to continue learning is greater and decreases the risk of dropout. Teachers must be able to identify the effort done by students, the obstacles that they find learning and redirect them so they don't lose motivation and fall in the dropout. Through a learning based on the procedures, the students also develop social skills and communication among themselves. They are able to deal with conflict and cope with constant educational and social changes. The behavior varies as they feel more or less integrated and motivated in the development of planned activities. It is therefore important to evaluate procedural activities through a continuous assessment.

At the beginning of the school year, we carry out an initial assessment in which we try to determine the level of knowledge, skills and attitudes, so that the processes of learning and assessment can be adapted.

When applying a model of evaluation, we do so regarding to the context of our students, adapting concepts and content to their needs, evaluating the level of response depending on the contents and objectives we have planned.

We organize the strategy to follow in a way that can be suitable to the needs, interests and special features that the students determine and the constraints imposed by the social and organizational context.



We head the evaluation of the process to the evaluation of the results of the teaching unit, and we include the analysis of positive and negative results during the implementation, in that way we can start a process of review and improvement, especially to help those students at risk of dropping out (fortunately at our school is a minority, but no less important to try to avoid it)

The aim of the assessment – concerning to our education program - depends on the objectives and levels of abilities associated with the subject. In general, there are many techniques of assessment such as diagnostic tests, questionnaires, observation, individual or group interviews...), they all have strengths and weaknesses, and none is perfect, so that we do not follow just one, we try to take the best of each and apply it and adapt it to the group. When assessing, we take into account different important factors such as personal, materials and program learning results. And this is evaluated in relation to the student's response to the content of the learning process, knowledge and skills developed by the students, as a result of their participation and behaviour adopted by the students regarding to their participation in the educational process.

When talking about the evaluation of the educational process, we also have to consider the assessment of social skills, that although we have not named them yet, we consider them very significant.

The development of communication is essential so that the student will be able to express clearly and effectively messages and keep an active listening. The ability of students to communicate each other, to understand what to do in each situation, constitutes an effective part in the context of learning, especially in the cooperative learning, methodology applied in many subjects.

The ability to deal with conflict is a very important social skill in everyday life and to cope with constant changes of educational practices that allow us to apply new training methods and training techniques to achieve more effective learning. Along with the change of new techniques, we try to develop in the student the ability to continue learning and be organized in the accomplishment of his/her tasks.

In the context of the evaluation, we also apply a general assessment of all our procedures and key factors of the educational activity to achieve the objectives we had set. This makes us get involved in review and continuous improvement.

