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Evaluation Strategies: Career Exploration Unit

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Evaluation Strategies

It is imperative that today's education is equipping students with the tools to be productive contributors to society with the ability to successfully compete in the global market. Research has shown that students are more invested in their learning if they can apply it to their own context and interests. With contextual learning in mind, the career exploration course is specifically designed to help students understand the connection between their current education and their success in the future. In order to support effective and successful achievement of learning outcomes, both formative and summative evaluation methods are used in the career exploration curriculum.

Formative and Summative Evaluations

The formative evaluations are conducted in a number of different ways. For example, the students are informally surveyed to determine the students' knowledge of career paths and academic preparation before the course content is explored. Ongoing student collaboration and dialogue throughout the career exploration unit also provides a way to assess what the students are learning. Twenty-first century skills, such as critical thinking skills, communication, and collaboration, are all informally evaluated throughout the course. Also, various assessments that range from completing career inventories to conducting career related interviews provide feedback on the student learning outcomes.

In addition to the formative evaluations, a summative evaluation of the eighth grade career curriculum is also an ongoing process. For example, the students create an online career portfolio as they complete the career course. This portfolio can be updated and expanded as the students continue to develop throughout high school. The online portfolios will be monitored and tracked by the career instructor to collect and evaluate career development data over time.

Additional Evaluation Strategies

Professional development also provides valuable evaluation opportunities. The career instructor participates in professional development opportunities, such as the All Ohio Counselor Conference and Articulation sponsored by the Ohio Association of College Admissions Counselors, in order to collaborate with other professionals on career and transition curriculum. Professional development opportunities are designed to provide insight on best practices and up-to-date resources, which are helpful in evaluating the career curriculum. Also, it is vital to examine data and assessments in order to make informed decisions about the effectiveness of education and student growth. The career instructor will continue to collect data through the use of various assessment tools, including pre-test and post-test activities, to provide evidence that the eighth grade students are effectively meeting the career class goals and will eventually have longitudinal data on the impact of the class content over time.

References

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