Student Teaching Data Collection System

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Introduction/Need for Idea or Innovation

According to Kuehl, "Student teaching is a complex learning experience that requires careful supervision. Cooperating teachers must create a sustaining environment that will facilitate maximum development of student teachers" (1984, p. 2). Much has been written concerning the importance of the student teaching experience and indeed it seems impossible to overstate the significance of this rich learning environment for preservice teachers. To facilitate and evaluate this experience, the faculty of the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication at the University of Georgia utilizes: internship journals, verification of placement forms, teaching experience forms, pre and post observation sheets, professional growth plans, internship evaluation forms, instructional plan check sheets, formative and summative teaching assessment forms, and teaching performance review forms. This cadre of evaluation tools generates a substantial amount of paperwork that is difficult to summarize, condense, and utilize in paper format.

This challenge of managing a large volume of forms made obvious the need for a faster and more efficient method of collecting and compiling large amounts of data collected from each student teaching experience; the Student Teaching Data Collection System (STDCS) was created to meet this need. STDCS provides student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors a single online resource to complete, save, print, store, and review all data collected during the student teaching experience.

How it Works/Methodology/Program Phases/Steps

There are two portals to this online site which serve different functions, however these two portals are dependent on each other as they are connected to the same database where information is submitted and stored.

1. The public portal provides student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors with access to blank forms in Adobe Acrobat format (PDF). Each party can select the form that is relevant to their task, complete the form online, save a copy to their local computer, print a hard copy, and submit the data to the online database.

2. The private portal provides university supervisors with online access to forms that have been completed and submitted by student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors. When university supervisors access these forms they are able to repopulate the forms with student data by clicking on the student name; allowing them immediate access to all available information on each student teacher.

Results to Date/Implications

The immediate implication of the STDCS system is that student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors have an efficient way to compile all of the data points collected during student teaching experiences. The long term implication of this system is that an enormous amount of student teaching data will be collected and compiled which will allow for a more holistic evaluation of the ALEC student teaching program.

Serendipitously, through efforts to more efficiently employ the forms completed to evaluate the student teaching process, an excellent system has been created to meet the assessment needs of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). During a 2006 NCATE review of the teacher preparation program at University of Georgia NCATE recommended collecting more robust data on student teacher experiences. The STDSS system provides a data base where all student teacher information is compiled and can be presented to NCATE in an organized format.

Future Plans/ Advice to Others

Currently all of the forms are online to allow for data input, but at this time not all forms can be repopulated online with student data by university supervisors. Concerns regarding student privacy must be weighed against the convenience of having all student data available in an online format. While security measures are taken to ensure student privacy, an additional layer of security is added by only storing the data within the database.

A concern for student teachers and cooperating teachers are school firewalls which occasionally do not allow for the posting of data in any form; thus preventing student teachers and cooperating teachers from submitting their information while at school. The two easiest ways to overcome this problem are: 1) Have the student teacher save the form on their computer and submit it when they are at home, away from the school's firewall. 2) Have the student complete the form, save an electronic version, and email it to the university supervisor to submit.

Another concern is for university supervisors when conducting an observation that takes place in a lab or outdoor setting. In a setting where a laptop computer is not practical hard copies of the forms must be completed by hand, a copy made for the student teacher to retain, and when the university supervisors returns to a computer the comments must be typed into the form and submitted.

Costs/Resources Needed

The cost of this project is minimal as most universities already have server space and it takes approximately 40 hours to build, update, and maintain the system. Student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors must have the free version of Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0 or higher installed on their computers to complete, print, and submit the forms; they must have Adobe Acrobat Professional 5.0 or higher to save electronic copies of the forms on their local computers.

References

Kuehl, R. (1984). *Critical behaviors of cooperating teachers/ key persons in quality student teaching programs (a research study).* University of Iowa: Cedar Falls.