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ALTE 615 Unit 5 Assignment 2

Best Practices

Introduction

Alternative education has an obligation to provide supportive environments for students who lack of attention in their school tasks and have problems. Most of alternative school's goals are:

1. To empower and support at-risk students to create a positive vision and greater options for their future
2. to help each students served develop the emotional, social and academic skills necessary to successfully return to their base school and community
3. to help students develop a positive self concept and identity
4. to maintain positive and continuous communication with parents and community and
5. to use teaching and learning strategies that will motivate students and encourage their participation, etc.

In the best practices, I will mention only two practices that I believe should be important in alternative school task. Those practices are the parents' involvement and innovation curriculum approaches.

Parents' Involvement

Alternative schools try to help ensure that every at-risk student can receive a quality education. So, if schools would like to achieve this objective, they should have to get parents and also communities more involved in children's education to help schools develop quality every aspect and plans for children's future.

According to Epstein (1995), the traditional kinds of involvement were expanded to six types of parent involvement in schools: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Each type of involvement is valuable and each has an impact on students.

The main idea of parent involvement is how alternative schools and teachers can encourage student's parents or relatives or even communities to understand that they all are most important advocate for children's education. They should feel comfortable visiting their child's school and examining the curriculum because some thing they may want to ask their child's teachers or administrators.

Concerning parent involvement, some of activities are designed for whole-school involvement and other work in individual classrooms. In this program, I would like to mention in whole-school involvement aspect.

According to President Bush discussed with several state educators on the implementation of “*No Child Left Behind*”, reading is the new civil right and a part of making sure our students are free citizens. Alternative school teams should do parents and teachers conferences to discuss with student’s parents or relatives concerning how to implement scientifically based reading research or even so on. School, teacher teams and parents also monitor carefully the progress of children together.

School and teachers should publish annual reports concerning school work and school progression. In order to publish this information, parents should receive the report card on the comparison of students at basic, proficient and advanced levels of academic achievement, the professional qualifications of teachers, percentages of student not tested and identification of schools in need of improvement by using test. Test results give parents information about the academic progress of their children and the quality of their children’s schools. So, parents, teachers and students will be able to make good decisions together about program selection, curriculum and professional development.

The following section is some activities found. I believe these activities should support for parents that are growing in popularity.

- **Family Night** – are often focused on a theme.
- **First Day Celebrations** – are wonderful way to bring in many parents to the school.
- **Community Festivals** – are easy to increase participation in big school wide celebrations, bring schools into arenas that families enjoy together.

Innovative Approaches

The innovative approaches are comprehensive program related. For instance, making a difference, career guidance program, the challenge ahead, attracting and retaining teachers and so on are related to the innovation approaches. In this approach, I will mention only using technologies to enhance engaged learning that is, in my opinion, most important for alternative schools and teachers.

According to Means, Blando, Olson, Middleton, Morocco, Remz, and Zorfass (1993), teachers can draw on technology applications to simulate real-world environments and create actual environments for experimentation, so that students can carry out authentic tasks as real workers would, explore new terrains, meet people of different cultures, and use a variety of tools to gather information and solve problems.

Along with the advantage of technologies in education, technologies could provide meaningful learning experiences for all children. That advantage benefits not only regular students, but also at-risk student as well. Classrooms that can manage more effectively the relationship between technologies and education shift will encourage students to develop higher order skills and to function effectively in the world beyond the classrooms.

In terms of technologies related, I would like to comment about materials keeping first. Technological materials should be available for the content subjects required for any school, and supplies should be upgraded to be no more than 5 to 10 years old. Multimedia materials - over-head projectors, computers, etc. – should have to be available and used in most classrooms as possible as. From this result, I would like alternative schools to have the technology funds and management team, who can take care of these funds and equipment maintenance.

Concerning teachers and staffs, I will contact to other schools or even universities to find the way to develop teacher and staff's skill to be effective to incorporate technologies into classrooms. My goal is for the teacher to be able to guide students to plan and achieve a successful future in accordance with overall school goals. In classrooms, teachers may involve the use of technologies with student created products, with opportunities to explore idea and express their creativities.

Finally, those contents mentioned are just a few of best practices. No type of practice is better than the other, but the main idea of best practices, in my thought, is to understand how to collaborate each practice to most benefit students and other schools.