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Nicole Barthel

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Implementing Standardized Test Results in the Classroom

Nikki Barthel

Department of Mathematics, University of North Dakota

Introduction

Students take multiple standardized tests throughout the year, which can have a tremendous impact on the school and students in positive and negative ways. The basis of this research will be focusing on two 7th grade students at Valley Middle School in Grand Forks, North Dakota. By law, states are required to test students in reading and math in grades 3-8 and at least once in high school. The major focus of this is to close student achievement gaps by providing all children with a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. Standardized test results evaluate and analyze students progress using various representations obtained from the results. In this project, data will be used to observe first-hand how teachers and administrators positively use the information to implement changes in the classroom to not only benefit the two students, but the classroom as a whole.

Positive Impact

- Standardized tests objectively compare students skill levels within the school and across schools
- Serves as a guideline for where teachers should start their curriculum and if re-teaching is needed
- Paired with the standards to ensure mastery of grade-appropriate material
- Allows school districts to discover teachers who excel in their curriculum

Negative Impact

- Narrows the curriculum, which can make teachers focus on subjects such as reading and math
- Scores don't provide a true picture of the students' ability
- Test scores can impact confidence
- Teacher evaluations have been tied to standardized test results

Standardized Testing at Valley Middle School

At Valley Middle School, STAR tests are administered in the fall, winter, and spring. Star assessments are short tests that provide teachers with learning data. STAR is an assessment of math achievement for students in grades 1-12. STAR math tracks development these domains: expressions and equations, geometry, ratios and proportional relationships, the number system, and statistics and probability. Within the school district, Valley Middle School is fortunate enough to have an instructional coach. At Valley Middle School, if permitted by a teacher, the instructional coach will go into the classroom to help the teacher differentiate their teaching to help students at all percentile ranks. The two female students I will be looking at are in 7th grade math classes with the same teacher, but different class periods. These students will be referred to as Kate and Sarah. According to Star testing, obtaining a forty-one percentile rank is considered proficient.

Results

One of the many benefits of STAR testing is that it yields instant results. Teachers don't have to wait weeks in order to find out what level their students and classroom are at and can immediately start differentiating their instruction to reach all of their students needs.

	Kate	Sarah
Percentile Rank	3	36
Grade Equivalent	3.4	6.0
Domains:		
Expressions and Equations	5	29
Geometry	4	23
Ratios and Proportional Relationships	5	31
The Number System	11	48
Statistics and Probability	1	6

Figure 1: Breakdown of Scores

Results Continued

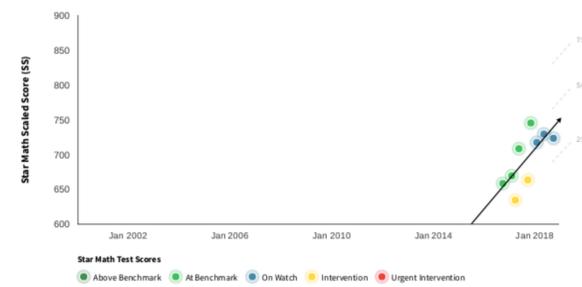


Figure 2: Sarah's Trend Line

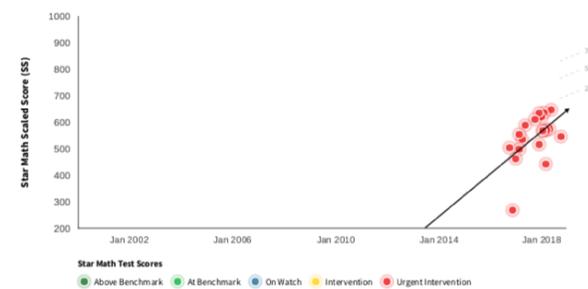


Figure 3: Kate's Trend Line

Implementing Results Using Differentiate Instruction

- Use the grade equivalence and problem domains to look at content standards to become familiar with any learning gaps from 5th-7th grade to benefit students like Kate and Sarah
- Create task cards for a specific lesson that tailors to both students who need remediation and enrichment
- Stations that do not require a time limit, instead have "checkpoints" with the teacher
- Group students using test results, interests, and topic to create a safe and supportive learning environment
- Utilize problem domains to create a conceptual word wall with definitions, graphics, and manipulatives

Glossary

- Differentiated Instruction** means factoring in the student's individual learning styles and level of readiness first before designing a lesson.
- Domain Scores** estimate a students mastery of each domain for the students grade level.
- Grade Equivalence** represents how a students test performance compares with that of other students nationally.
- Percentile Rank** ranges from 1 to 99 and provides a measure of a students math ability compared to other students in the same grade nationally.
- Scaled Score** useful for comparing student performance over time across grades. It is calculated based on the difficulty of questions and the number of correct responses.

References

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Acknowledgements

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