New York State Education Department
Office of Special Education
Educational Partnership

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Module 2: Building Your Co-teaching Team

Co-teaching: A Comprehensive Approach

Produced by the Technical Assistance Partnership for Academics at the University of Albany.

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Our Staff

Staff Information

Today's Facilitators

Introductions

- Name
- Role
- District
- School
- Population Served

Meeting Norms

- Take care of your needs (water, food, restroom, etc.)
- Speak your truth – Use "I" statements
- Ask what you need to understand and contribute
- Listen with respect
- Push your growing edge
- Participate and struggle together
- Expect a lack of closure
- Respect each others' needs and learning styles

Agenda

- Welcome
- Purpose and Outcomes
- Sections:
    - Overview of Co-teaching
    - Co-teachers' Unique Contributions
    - Basis of an Effective Co-teaching Partnership
- Culminating Activity
- Wrap-up and Survey

Training Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- use the unique contributions of co-teaching partners to ensure high quality education and appropriate accommodations for diverse learners.
- identify key components of an effective co-teaching partnership.
- describe the three Co's of co-teaching that contribute to an effective partnership.
- utilize reflection tools to strengthen a co-teaching partnership.

Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities

Self-Advocacy

Students engage in self-advocacy and are involved in determining their own educational goals and plan.

Family Partnership

Parents, and other family members, are engaged as meaningful partners in the special education process and the education of their child.

Specially-Designed Instruction

Teachers design, provide, and assess the effectiveness of specially-designed instruction to provide students with disabilities with access to participate and progress in the general education curriculum.

Research-Based Instruction

Teachers provide research-based instructional teaching and learning strategies and supports for students with disabilities.

Multi-tiered Support

Schools provide multi-tiered systems of behavioral and academic support.

Inclusive Activities

Schools provide high-quality inclusive programs and activities.

Transition Support

Schools provide appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in career development and opportunities to participate in work-based learning.

Slide Marker Icons

Activity

Handout

Poll

Discussion

Reflection

Action Plan

Overview of Co-teaching

Time: 5-8 minutes
Task: Reflect on the quote below
Materials: Participant Packet
Share Out: Whole group

"People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe."

Simon Sinek

Co-teaching Clarified

- New York State includes an optional special education service called Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) in the regulations.

- In classrooms that provide ICT there is a general education teacher and a special education teacher working together to create and implement lessons that match the needs of all learners in the room.

- The instructional methodology/structure that the teachers use has been referred to as co-teaching in educational research.

- This methodology can be applied in any situation when two teachers provide instruction together, not just ICT.

In this training we will be focusing on the instructional methodology of co-teaching, not the special education service ICT.

Concept of Instructional Delivery Model

Who Can Be a Partner in the Co-teaching Instructional Delivery Model?

- Special Education Teachers
- Transdisciplinary Teachers
- Speech Language Pathologists
- Gifted and Talented Teachers
- Library Media Specialists
- English as a New Language (ENL) Teachers
- School Counselor/School Psychologist/Social Workers

Common Myths and Concerns

Myths

1. If two co-teachers get along, their students will show improvement.
2. If a student is placed in a co-teaching classroom, he/she/they will show academic improvement.
3. There is a lead teacher in co-teaching.
4. Co-teaching is two teachers doing the exact same thing, at the exact same time.
5. Each teacher is only responsible for supporting specific students.

Concerns

1. The specialist may be viewed as a teacher aide/assistant and not a teacher.
2. In ENL/ICT settings, the general education teacher may be worried about watering down the curriculum.
3. The specialist might not be able to use their expertise.
4. The general education teacher might be teaching with someone who may not know the curriculum and/or the specialist may be teaching unfamiliar content.

Benefits of Building a Strong Team

Students, Teachers and the School Community

• **Students gain from collaborative lesson planning which covers the needs of all students** (Murawski & Hughes, 2009).	• **Personal and professional support for teachers** (Capp, 2004; Cramer, 2006; Cramer & Stivers, 2007; Lawton, 1999; Villa, et al., 2004; Walther-Thomas, in Mitchell, 2005)	• **Staff are more united** (Nordlund, in Beamish, Bryer, & Davies, 2006)
• **Students view themselves as capable learners** (Walther-Thomas, in Mitchell, (2005)	• **Willingness from teachers to try new things and be more creative** (Basso & McCoy, 2007; Friend & Cook, in Gately & Gately, 2001; Santamaria & Thousand, 2004; Villa et al., 2004)	• **Enhanced sense of community within general education classrooms** (Capp, 2004; Villa et al., 2004; Walther-Thomas, in Mitchell, 2005)
• **Sharing of knowledge, skills, and resources between co-teachers** (Friend & Pope, 2005; Santamaria & Thousand, 2004)	• **Opportunities for professional growth** (Basso & McCoy, 2007; Bauwen & Hourcade, in Mitchell 2005;Friend & Reisling, in Tichenor, 2004; Villa et al., 2004)	• **Increased job satisfaction for teachers** (Basso & McCoy, 2007; Friend & Reisling, in Tichenor, 2004)

Co-teachers' Unique Contributions

Strength of Two Teachers

In a co-teaching situation, it helps to think of both educators as experts.

For example, you may have a general doctor and a cardiologist. Each have their own area of expertise.

Too often, in co-teaching, one teacher is thought of as the lead teacher and the teaching partner is thought of as a teaching assistant. This is inaccurate and would liken more to a doctor/nurse relationship rather than two professionals with their own areas of expertise.

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Unique Contributions

General Education Teacher

- Curriculum

- Classroom Management

- Knowledge of Grade Level Expectations
  - learning
  - behavior

- Essential Skills
  - timing
  - coverage of topics

Unique Contributions Continued

Teaching Partner/Specialist

- Process of Learning

- Individualization

- Documentation and Accountability

- Essential Skills
  - access
  - mastery

Blended Expertise

"The differences in their professional orientation and expertise should lead to core differences in how each would approach instruction - and the result would be intense discussions, lively debates, and a classroom in which teaching and learning reflect the blended best of each perspective."

Friend (2019)

Check-in

Time: 5-8 minutes
Task: Answer the questions below
Materials: Participant Packet
Share Out: Whole group

What does "the blended best of each perspective" mean to you?

How might the differences in professional priorities of each teacher affect shared instruction?

Basis of an Effective Co-teaching Partnership

Building the Environment

"Farmers and gardeners know you cannot make a plant grow…

The plant grows itself. What you do is provide the conditions for growth."

Sir Ken Robinson (n.d.)

Developmental Stages of Co-teaching

**Beginning Stage**: Guarded, careful communication

Compromising Stage: Give and take communication, with a sense of having to "give up" to "get"

Collaborative Stage: Open communication and interaction, mutual admiration

Effective Partnerships

The 3 Components of Coteaching

"Essential to coteaching is having a shared sense of respect, responsibility, practice, planning and reflecting together."

Coteaching

Co-responsibility

Co-respect

Co-planning

Reflection
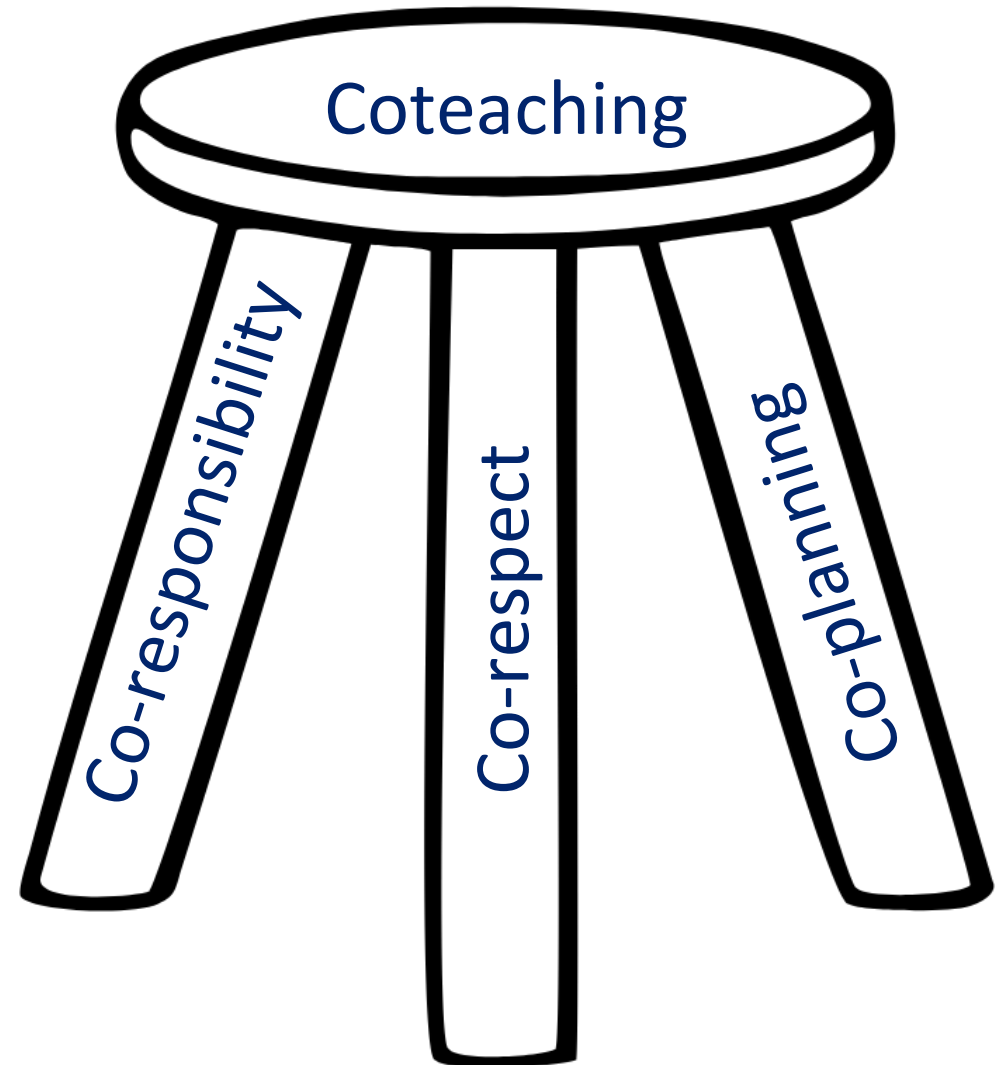
Consider…

Time: 5 minutes
Task: Answer the questions below
Materials: Participant Packet
Share Out: None

Do I believe that there is more than one right way to carry out almost any teaching/learning task?

Am I willing to let my co-teacher carry out teaching tasks at which I am particularly competent?

Am I to allow my co-teacher to see aspects of my teaching in which I am not particularly comfortable?

Am I to tell my co-teacher when I disagree about an issue or have a concern?

Co-respect

Sharing Professional Space

"… it is important for both teachers to have space in the room… The space in the classroom must be made to look as though it is both teachers' space…" (Case, 2017)

Consider the impact of the following:
- Specialists may co-teach in multiple rooms and thus may not feel like they have a homebase
- Only one teacher's name is on the classroom door
- Two teachers sharing equipment/materials in one classroom
- General education teachers sharing a classroom and needing to make space for a second teacher's desk and supplies

Co-respect Continued

Respectful Communication

"When teachers are communicating well or making an effort to communicate, the evidence shows that the coteaching relationship can be very strong." (Case, 2017)

Consider the impact of the following:

- Modeling respectful interactions when speaking to each other in front of students
- Using words such as "we", "us" and "our" when you would typically use "I" and "my"
- Routinely asking co-teaching partner their opinion in front of the students to show that your co-teaching partner's ideas are valued in the classroom
- Problem-solving together
- Having flexibility and being open minded

Parity Checklist

Time: 8 minutes

Task: Complete the parity checklist (*with your co-teaching partner if present*)

Materials: Parity checklist in your participant packet

Share Out: Whole group

Co-responsibility

Collective Accountability

"Co-responsibility occurred when each teacher assumed responsibility for all aspects of the classroom; the instruction, the students, and the teaching and learning outcomes."

(Scantlebury et al., 2008)

Consider the impact of the following:

- Seeing something in a situation that could or should be changed and immediately making the changes instead of waiting for your co-teacher to handle it
- Reflecting with your co-teacher after a lesson, to determine what worked well and what improvements you would like to make for future lessons
- Both partners in the co-teaching team **actively** teaching the entire time

Roles and Responsibilities

Time: 8 minutes

Task: Complete one of the roles and responsibility checklists (*with your co-teaching partner if present*)

Materials: *Roles and Responsibilities of Collaborative Teachers* or *Collaborative Teaching Responsibilities Checklist* in your participant packet

Share Out: Whole group

Co-planning

Designing a Classroom to Meet the Needs of All Students

"By far the most common dilemma expressed among teachers and administrators setting up or refining co-teaching programs is the challenge arranging and using common planning time." (Friend, 2019)

Consider the impact of the following:

- Both teachers providing relevant professional expertise
- Teachers working side-by-side
- Problems and solutions co-conceptualized
- Shared responsibility and ownership
- Learning from regular interactions with and observations of their co-teacher

Ideas

Time: 5-8 minutes

Task: Reflect on the following: *What might be some ways in which we can build on the ideas of our co-teaching partner, instead of rejecting the ideas?*

Materials: Participant Packet

Share Out: Whole group

Overview of Resources

A shared goal of ensuring success for ALL students

Handout

S.H.A.R.E Worksheet: Sharing Hopes, Attitudes, Responsibilities, and Expectations

This tool provides an opportunity for first, individual reflection on hopes, attitudes, responsibilities and expectations followed by shared thoughts after reading each other's responses and then agreeing, compromising or agreeing to disagree.

Co-Teaching Reflection Tool

This tool provides an opportunity for first, individual reflection on the partnership's current status of collaboration and co-teaching approaches and then a shared reflection by the team of their ratings to identify strengths and challenges.

Support for Building a Relationship with your Co-Teacher

This tool provides an opportunity for first, individual self-reflection on collaboration and communication skills and then co-reflection on the skills of the team.

Reflection Tools

Time: 15 minutes

Task: Select one reflection tool. Complete it independently. Share your answers with your co-teaching partner (if applicable).

Materials: Participant Packet

Share Out: Whole group

Activity

References

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- Friend, M. (2019). *Co-Teach! A handbook for building and sustaining effective classroom partnerships in inclusive schools* (3rd ed.) Marilyn Friend, Inc.

- Scantlebury, K., Gallo-Fox, J. & Wassell, B. (2007). Coteaching As a Model For Preservice Secondary Science Teacher Education. *Teacher and Teacher Education, 24,* 967-981

- Sinek, S. (2009, September). Start with why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action [Video]. TED Conferences. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4ZoJKF_VuA&vl=en&themeRefresh=1

Questions and Answers

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Meeting Evaluation Survey

Link here