Co-Teaching
Academy 1 v.1: Working Together: General and Special Educators
Participant Handouts

Great Urban Schools: Learning Together Builds Strong Communities

2005 National Institute for Urban School Improvement™
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Module 5: Co-teaching

Academy 1: Working Together: General and Special Educators

This academy explores the elements of collaborative teaching relationships and the necessary institutional structures and professional skills needed to collaborate successfully.

Academy Outcomes

As a result of the activities and information shared at this Leadership Academy, participants will:

• Identify expectations for collaboration and consultation between general and special educators

• Explore the skills that educators need to collaborate successfully

• Examine the time needed for successful collaboration and how buildings develop schedules that create time for collaborators to plan and evaluate together

• Examine current practices in their own buildings and identify strengths and needs

Agenda

We constructed this Leadership Academy to occur within a 3-hour timeframe with 15 minutes or so for breaks and other time adjustments. The times listed below are approximate but reflect the time these activities and lectureettes have previously taken. Facilitators should be flexible, read their audience, and work to achieve the overall purpose and outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>Introductions and Greetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 min</td>
<td>Activity 1: Sharing a Classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>Lecturette 1: Making Co-teaching a success</td>
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<td>20 min</td>
<td>Activity 2: Believing in Co-teaching</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>10 min</td>
<td>Lecturette 2: Scheduling Co-teaching</td>
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<td>20 min</td>
<td>Activity 3: Time for Co-teaching</td>
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Resources


Looks at the views of Tiffany Royal, a fifth grade teacher at Flamingo Elementary School in Miami, and education teacher Joyce Duryea, regarding co-teaching. How Tiffany felt about the training which she received to become an elementary teacher; Modifying models for co-teaching roles; Identification of several alternative models to grazing and tag-team-teaching.

INSETS: Common co-teaching issues; Tips for co-teaching.


The long-standing gap between research and practice in general and special education has become a matter of national concern. Described in this article is a "blueprint" designed to bridge the gap based on lessons learned at the Juniper Gardens Children's Project (JGCP). The goal of the blueprint is to initiate and sustain ongoing interactions between classroom teachers and researchers interested in using research-validated practices in local classroom settings. Its components are partnership, collaboration, consultation, and professional development. Discussed are the blueprint and some initial findings of its use. Considered are the implications of the blueprint and of successfully moving research into classroom practice.

In this article, the authors describe a change model that was developed and implemented over 3 years in 2 southern California school districts to promote inclusive practices. A study documented the change process and the impact of related district and site activities through interviews with general and special educators, administrators, and parents. Findings from the study indicate that all sites moved toward inclusive practices, with the participants reporting benefits for students with disabilities, the general education student population, and educational practices of general and special educators. Approaches in implementing inclusive practices differed, however, resulting in significant variability among schools in services provided to students with special needs. Implications in moving toward inclusive practices are discussed, including factors perceived as contributing to the change process, the configuration of services provided, and issues related to sustaining inclusive efforts. The data suggest the complexity of change and the diversity of programs that emerge from a common model of change. Balancing inclusion with specialized instruction for all students emerged as an important component of inclusive practices.


Researchers examined 4 elementary and 2 middle schools that were achieving exemplary results for all students in an effort to identify and describe critical indicators of overall school success. Embedded case studies revealed key capacity-building elements related to collaboration between general and special education teachers. These elements included a culture of shared responsibility, high expectations for all students and a sense of a professional community within the schools. The purpose of the project was to identify critical indicators of school success that could be translated into capacity-building activities that support positive outcomes for all students. Although all of these schools had strong collaborative communities and high expectations for all students, considerable variability was evident in other areas, including shared leadership and support for collaborative practices. This article addresses some of the factors that fostered or impeded the collaborative nature of these schools.


Studies the effectiveness of coteaching in a general education life skills class in providing inclusive instruction to students with and without disabilities. Case study of inclusive instruction; Context for general and special education collaboration; Planning ongoing accommodations.

Richard Rose, writing in this journal in his role as Research Section Editor (BJSE, Volume 29, Number 1), argued that teachers should learn to do research in collaboration with other professionals, as part of a drive to make teaching a ‘research-based profession’. In this article, Joan Forbes, Senior Lecturer in Educational Studies in the Faculty of Education at the University of Aberdeen, explores this idea in greater depth from her perspective as course leader for an MEd module on inter-agency collaboration. She proposes that recommendations for collaboration to support children with language and communication disorders do not attend to the difficulties involved between professionals from different backgrounds who use different discourses and draw upon different research evidence as a basis for practice. Her paper draws on ‘postmodern’ research approaches and Michael Foucault's views of ‘discourse’ to examine a variety of theoretical perspectives previously applied to collaboration. It argues for the value of further theoretical diversity and methodological plurality and introduces discourse analysis as a tool for helping to understand the notion of collaboration. At the end of her challenging and intriguing paper, Joan Forbes offers some suggestions concerning the value of ‘new’ questioning kinds of analysis.


Focuses on the importance of the relationship between parents, special education teachers and therapists to the physical education of students with disabilities. Strategies for working together; Definition of collaboration; Barriers that can hinder the process of collaboration.

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Because research has found that differentiation of instruction for gifted students does not typically occur within the general classroom, collaboration between gifted and general education teachers is critical in order to ensure appropriate services to students with high abilities. Gifted education teachers are now being called upon to provide services to their students in the regular education environment. This fundamental change in setting mirrors mandated changes in special education, wherein students with disabilities are increasingly served in the general education classroom. This article provides a new definition of collaboration within the context of gifted education and expands on the utilization of
coteaching as a collaborative strategy. Five models of coteaching originally developed for meeting the needs of students with disabilities were adapted, and examples of their use with gifted students in the general education classroom are provided.


This article explores the application and use of curriculum mapping as a tool to assist teachers in communicating the content, skills, and assessments used in their classrooms. The process of curriculum mapping is explained, and the adaptation of the process for special education teachers is detailed. Finally, examples are given of how curriculum mapping can assist both special and general education teachers in meeting the needs of students in the classroom. Although this article will apply the use of curriculum mapping data at the middle school level, the process of mapping is equally effective at the elementary and high school levels.


Functional assessment is a multi-step process that addresses operant variables to develop interventions that are both effective and socially valid. The purpose of this study was to determine whether a general education teacher could conduct functional assessment and treatment in her classroom after receiving training. We report data for one teacher whose application of functional assessment and treatment lead to a reduction of problem behaviors for two students. The teacher reported favorable responses to the acceptability of using functional assessment in the classroom.


Reviews special education progress on the three outcomes fundamental to ensuring high and challenging learning results for every exceptional learner. Reason quality teacher is the single most important factor in students' learning; Difference between how administrators and teachers perceive the need for and availability of communication and time for collaboration; One of the key elements of job satisfaction and retention; Vital role that quality professional development plays in improving students' outcomes.

Collaboration between special and general education teachers has received increased attention over the past decade as part of the effort to create inclusive classrooms and to blur the boundaries between programs and students. Yet collaboration can have multiple meanings. This special issue presents data related to collaborative practices derived from three projects funded under a U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs research priority, Beacons of Excellence. Research projects funded under this priority were to identify schools achieving exemplary results with students with disabilities, as well as with their peers. Researchers from the separate projects whose results are presented in this issue studied schools in very different contexts using different methodologies. Researchers identified characteristics of their schools and then came together to identify features common across all schools that appeared to be dominant forces in creating the exemplary schools. Collaborative practices were among a handful of such features that emerged across projects. Collaboration in these exemplary schools included both specific teaching practices as well as a climate and culture that supported a community of professionals working together to improve teaching and achievement for all students. Findings from these projects provide important insights into how schools are defining and implementing collaboration.


Discusses the requirements for individualized education programs, collaborations and assessments in the United States. Role of the 1997 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments in aligning special education policies with standards-based reforms; Increase in collaboration between general and special education teachers.


This article describes a promising form of professional collaboration: coteaching between a content area teacher and a special education teacher. In an investigation of a schoolwide coteaching model in an urban middle school that places students with disabilities in heterogeneous classrooms, researchers interviewed key school leaders and made detailed observations of coteaching. The study found that although content teachers conduct more of the instruction and special education teachers provide more individualized assistance, both use a full range of instructional roles. Essential to the success of coteaching partnerships were collaborative school structures, equal status rules for teachers, a commitment to all students' learning, and strong content knowledge.

Presents a strategy that may help teachers initiate and maintain effective collaborative relationships in high-poverty urban environments. Process used to assist general education teachers at the secondary level in understanding, planning for, and initiating collaborative relationships with special education teachers.


Discusses the requirements for teaching students with special needs in the U.S. Collaborations between special education teachers and typical classroom teachers; Cross-categorical licensure requiring special educators to be more prepared across disability areas; Perspectives of special education as a profession.


Investigates collaboration among school professionals and educators working with culturally and linguistically diverse and exceptional (CLDE) students. Perceptions, practices and needs of educational professionals as they relate to the service delivery of CLDE students; Development of the Collaborative Survey for teachers working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse and Exceptional students; Impact of the trends toward collaboration among educators on the education of CLDE students.


Although pupils with disabilities are spending more time within the general education classroom, teachers have shown variable levels of willingness and interest in modifying their instruction to meet the needs of these pupils. Studies have indicated that simple modifications are the most likely to be implemented. This study surveyed resource teachers to determine how frequently paper and teacher-made paper instructional materials were being used in general education classrooms, and how those materials might be modified to enhance the likelihood of successful access by all students, including those with disabilities.
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The constraints and complexity entailed in the provision of comprehensive special education services at a school site argue for the importance of using whole schools as a unit of analysis in special education efficacy research. The case studies summarized in this special issue represent an important step forward in understanding how schools that support positive academic outcomes for all students are configured. All studies found support for the importance of collaboration (although the forms varied by school). Other common themes were peer support, shared responsibility for student learning, administrative support for collaboration, and informal communication mechanisms that supplemented more formal contacts between general and special education. The case studies can serve as a stimulus for further debate about how to define exemplary outcomes in special education and the critical dimensions for characterizing schools’ services to students with disabilities. They also provide directions for future research in understanding the processes that contribute to positive outcomes for students in special education.


Reports on the findings of a survey regarding the involvement of special education personnel in the development of educational accountability systems in the United States. Objectives for schools to make incremental gains in student test scores including special education students; Benefits of the collaboration between general and special education staff; Focal evolution of alternate education assessments.


In this study, perceptions of inclusion for students with both mild and severe disabilities were explored. Collaboration issues related to inclusion were also examined. Specifically, 180 general education and special education preservice and inservice teachers were given a questionnaire on inclusion. In addition, they were given another questionnaire two weeks later after viewing a videotape of a boy who half the teachers were told had a mild disability and half that he had a severe disability. There were no significant differences for educational type or experience for the items that focused on the intensity level of including with mild or severe disabilities. There were significant students differences for the items addressing collaboration issues. After the videotape was introduced, there were significant differences for both educational type and experience for items on intensity of inclusion. Implications of these results were discussed with emphasis on the teachers' apparent preference for a continuum of services.
Collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers is often mentioned in the literature as a means of accomplishing the inclusion of students with disabilities in general education. The purpose of this study was to describe, using both qualitative and quantitative data, the communication and collaboration practices in four high schools with demonstrated success at including students with disabilities in general education and achieving exemplary outcomes for all students. School wide approaches and classroom-level factors associated with collaboration characterize the themes that emerged as important to the success of these high schools. A discussion of these results and implications for practice are presented.


Proposes four alternative models for co-taught classrooms that rely on flexible teacher schedules and the use of paraprofessionals. Benefits of cooperative teaching; Need for new instructional models; Traditional co-teaching; Collaboration scheduling.
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Glossary

CO-TEACHING
Collaborative teaching between general and special education teachers.

FACILITATOR
A Collaborative Leadership Team process role. The Facilitator guides the meeting process and remains objective.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR URBAN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
The National Institute for Urban School Improvement (NIUSI) is funded by the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education. The mission of NIUSI is to support the building of capacity in urban schools and school districts so that students with disabilities are engaged in high quality curriculum and learning experiences that improve their ability to succeed in school and in post-school opportunities.