Initiating a Successful Co-Teaching Relationship

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Today’s points of discussion... 

- Define co-teaching
- Six models of co-teaching
- What to do prior to your first meeting
- What to do during your initial meeting
- How to handle your first class together
- How to reflect over your budding relationship
- How to maintain an effective relationship
What is co-teaching?

“The partnering of a general education teacher and a special education teacher or another specialist for the purpose of jointly delivering instruction to a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities or other special needs, in a general education setting and in a way that flexibly and deliberately meets their learning needs” (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2010, p. 11)
The simple definition?

- Co-planning
- Co-instructing
- Co-assessing
- AND co-just-about-everything-else
Similar to a marriage?

- Experts state that co-teaching is similar to a marriage (Sileo, 2011).

An ARRANGED marriage
Who benefits from co-teaching?

- Students with disabilities
- Students without disabilities
- Parents
- Administrators
- Teachers

(Bronson & Dentith, 2014; Mirza & Iqbal, 2014; Friend et al, 2012)
### Six Models of Co-Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One teach, one observe</td>
<td>One teacher delivers content&lt;br&gt;One teacher observes &amp; collects data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One teach, one assist</td>
<td>One teacher leads content&lt;br&gt;One teacher assists the lead teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Station teaching</td>
<td>Each teacher teaches a small group&lt;br&gt;Groups rotate between stations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parallel teaching</td>
<td>Each teacher delivers content to heterogeneous group simultaneously</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative teaching</td>
<td>One teacher delivers content to a large group&lt;br&gt;One teacher instructs small group via enrichment or remediation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team teaching</td>
<td>Both teachers instruct the whole group</td>
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(Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, & Shamberger, 2012)
Should co-teaching experience be part of teacher education programs?

ABSOLUTELY!

Almost 80% of special education students in Georgia spend at least half their day in general education classrooms (Georgia DOE, 2014).
So...you’ve been tapped for co-teaching...now what?

Before your initial meeting

During your initial meeting

During your first day of class

After your first day of class
Before your initial meeting...

- Familiarize yourself with the six models of co-teaching and consider visiting an effective co-taught classroom
- Mentally prepare by opening your mind to a new style of teaching
- Consider your strengths to bring to the partnership
- Brainstorm topics for discussion during your initial meeting

(Brown, Howarter, & Morgan, 2013; Kliegel & Weaver, 2014; Randhare Ashton, 2014)
Think-Pair-Share

- Take one of the index cards provided
- You have 1 minute to brainstorm for topics you feel should be discussed in an initial meeting of co-teachers
- Now...pair up with your elbow buddy to expand on your list of topics for 2 minutes
- Let’s share your ideas
Consider this springboard...

Complete a beliefs survey and a responsibilities checklist (Brown, Howarter, & Morgan, 2013)
During your initial meeting...

- Personal beliefs
- Classroom Practices
- Classroom Goals
Personal beliefs

- What are your perceptions of co-teaching?
- How do you feel about sharing a classroom?
- How do you plan to collaborate with your co-teacher?

(Sileo, 2011; Lawter, 2013; Solis, Vaughn, Swanson, & McCulley, 2012)
Classroom Practices

- Classroom Management
- Communication with parents
- Instructional Strategies
- Modifications and Accommodations
- Student assessment

(Lawter, 2013)
Classroom Goals

Goals for special education students

Goals for regular education students

Differentiation techniques

Responsibilities of each teacher

Student success

(Solis, Vaughn, Swanson, & McCulley, 2012)
Extras for discussion during initial meeting...  

- Six models of co-teaching  
- Personal backgrounds  
- Common ground for your partnership  
- Commitment to one another  
- Plans for co-planning
Your first day of class together...

- Respect one another
- Talk about students as “OUR” kids
- Present a unified front to students
- Ensure both teachers have equal opportunities to interact with class as a whole
- Demonstrate loyalty to one another and your students
Reflecting over your first day...

- **Successes**
- **Improvements**
- **Observations**

(Sileo, 2011)
GRASS IS GREENER WHEN YOU WATER IT

Maintain the effective co-teaching relationship you’ve worked so hard to build
Relationship maintenance strategies

- Continue to overcommunicate
- Continue to show respect and appreciation for one another
- Continue to demonstrate a united front
- Listen to your partner
- Keep your commitments
- Never participate in the blame game
- Develop enthusiasm fueled by each other

(Kliegel & Weaver, 2014; Mirza & Iqbal, 2014)
Sticky Note Summarizer

- Please take a sticky note from the basket.
- Take one minute to write down the most important piece of information you have learned from today
- When you finish, please stick it!
References


