Strategic Co-Teaching in Your School

Using the Co-Design Model

by

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Contents

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Foreword

Public education in America has evolved rapidly since 2001, the year that marked the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (PL 107-110). This legislation has transformed public education faster than any other reform movement, and its impact has been far reaching. From increased assessments, to mastery learning for proficiency, to requirements for highly qualified teachers and staff, NCLB has changed the landscape of teaching and learning. In many schools, the students most affected by NCLB are those identified to receive special education services.

In the 1970s and 1980s, self-contained classrooms for special education were thought to meet the needs of many students identified as exceptional. Students identified with special needs would participate in homeroom or the classroom opening exercises and then be whisked away for their instruction. Until this set of students had lunch or recess or packed their book bags for the day, they were nearly invisible to other students or teachers.

Many schools currently have self-contained classrooms, but the atmosphere is one characterized by flexibility and inclusiveness. The door to these types of classrooms is no longer shut but revolving, allowing students with special needs to participate, to the maximum extent appropriate, in general education programs and classes.

Parents, teachers, and administrators still struggle with defining what each child needs and which general education classes will be beneficial. As an administrator who has attended hundreds of individualized education program meetings, I have asked teams of teachers, parents, and advocates to reflect on a plethora of questions: Is this course appropriate? Will the adaptations be enough? Will the student feel awkward if he or she is not able to do the same activities as the other students? I honestly thought that I facilitated these conversations well until my nephew was diagnosed with a disability. My outlook and approach to serving children with special needs completely changed.

Through proficiency requirements from NCLB, co-teaching, inclusive education, and a belief that every child can benefit in some way from the general classroom, my nephew is growing and developing as a learner and young boy. There is no magical classroom titled learning support that has made the difference. His success at school can be attributed to access to the general education curriculum, appropriate supports, a collaborative team approach, and specific pull-out classes that address his language and socialization needs.

Collaboration and communication among school personnel are positive outcomes of NCLB and are critical to successful co-teaching practices. In addition, our students identified with special needs are now included in general classrooms with the supports necessary to allow them to be successful. The result for my nephew and for the thousands of students my districts have served is greater mastery of learning, increased socialization, and greater acceptance by others. Unlike businesses, which can be selective about their raw materials, public education in America accepts *all* students.

These successes in public education would not have been possible without professional development for staff and a commitment from school leaders who have agreed

to serve students with special needs in an inclusive setting. This book can guide educators in how they can provide an appropriate education for the diverse learners that are in their classrooms.

The authors, Bob, Richael, and Joe, have worked in my district and have helped transform our program, staff, and classrooms into an inclusive, welcoming educational setting that supports success for all students. Implementing collaborative practices via the Co-Design Model works. It takes time to make it appear easy and seamless, but by following the recommendations found in this book and addressing proactively the concerns that accompany co-teaching and other collaborative challenges, your classroom or school can become an inclusive setting that embraces all children at all ability levels.

Our children have one opportunity to get the best education that meets their needs. Most students can achieve and thrive in a variety of settings. But for students with special needs, each instructional moment is precious. The Co-Design Model provides maximum supports for student growth and development. I encourage the reader to embrace this book, collaborative practices that go beyond the Co-Teaching Model, and the students who benefit from these recommended practices.

Michelle Miller, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Blackhawk School District
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania

Preface

If you have been told to this read this manual (by either your professor or your administrator), you may be asking yourself, "Why do I need *another* training guide?"

We, the authors, hope that you have chosen to read this manual of your own accord because you think it will enhance the teaching methodology you currently embrace. However, we know that free time for teachers is scarce, and the reason you are reading this book doesn't matter; *the important thing is that you are reading it!* So, whether you are a beginning or veteran teacher; an early childhood, middle, secondary, general, or special educator; or a paraprofessional or administrator, the purpose of this manual is to promote collaborative, research-based practices via the Co-Design Model. The Co-Design Model may be implemented in your classroom, grade level, building, and district through preservice teacher training and professional development. Continuous and ongoing support for faculty is endorsed. The Co-Design Model promotes collaborative education in inclusive learning environments for all levels of learners. We hope you find this book exciting, motivating, practical, and most of all *successful* for *all* of your students!

When we started providing professional development for school districts on the implementation of co-teaching, we had no idea that our program would continue to evolve and become of interest to such a wide audience. The three of us serve as professors in the Department of Special Education at Slippery Rock University. This book is the product of our work and research conducted in school systems over several years in the areas of inclusion, co-teaching, collaboration, and compliance. The collaborative approach to education that is promoted in this manual is the *Co-Design Model,* a term we coined. The Co-Design Model has been presented at various international, national, state, and local conferences. Several journal publications that showcase our work are in circulation as well. Because of the wide acceptance and implementation of the model, we wanted to formally document the model's elements and pathways.

This book is intended for use by teachers at all grade levels and with any level of experience, content specialists in all curriculum areas, and many other professionals in the educational system, such as instructional coaches, reading specialists, physical and occupational therapists, nurses, and speech and language therapists. The book is also of interest to paraprofessionals and administrators, both at building and district levels.

Section I of this book includes two chapters. Chapter 1 serves as a foundation that briefly highlights the history of special education. This is information that all readers of this book should be familiar with. For some, it will be an introduction to the material; to others, it might be a refresher. Chapter 1 also includes information on specific disabilities, prevalence rates, and instructional considerations that may be beneficial for partners in a collaborative environment. Chapter 2 provides a look at inclusion, important court cases, and other issues that affect classrooms and influence practices within a school system.

Section II introduces and explains the Co-Design Model. This model comprises nine essential elements for promoting a collaborative approach to education. Along with these nine elements, there are four pathways for instructional implementation.

These pathways for instruction are techniques that have been proven in the classroom and are presented as recommended practices.

The nine essential elements are 1) leadership; 2) assembly of site; 3) curriculum knowledge; 4) co-instruction; 5) classroom management; 6) adaptations, accommodations, and modifications; 7) assessment; 8) personality types; and 9) co-design time. Specific examples are provided to help you implement the Co-Design Model in your own classroom or building. These chapters reference a series of forms that were devised specifically to support implementation of the Co-Design Model. Completed example forms are given in the chapters as models, and blank, reproducible versions are given in the appendix for use in the classroom.

The remainder of Section II discusses the four pathways for instruction: co-teaching, differentiated instruction, technology, and scaffolding. These four strategies have been shown to be effective again and again in the professional literature. The chapters on the pathways for implementation offer specific examples to help you execute the Co-Design Model to promote collaborative practices, no matter what the grade level, content area, or experience of the collaborative partners. As with the elements, forms have been developed to correspond to the pathways, and both completed examples and blank reproducible copies are provided.

Section III of the manual includes two chapters. Chapter 17 considers training and professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, administration, and preservice teachers. It examines the ongoing need for these services, as well as cost concerns for the district. The final chapter of the book addresses measuring a school's success with the implementation of the Co-Design Model. As with any school initiative, it is necessary to ensure the quality and commitment of the program.

As noted previously, an appendix with reproducible forms is included. An annotated bibliography also is provided to help you locate more information in areas of specific disabilities and topics.

You have probably noticed that preservice teachers are included in the audience for this book. We promote the model in both our undergraduate and graduate classes in the College of Education. In fact, Slippery Rock University hosts a workshop, open to all education majors, that promotes the student teacher and host teacher as co-teachers. This approach dovetails with our message and complements our in-district training. So, our training on collaborative education is not limited to special education majors; all education majors at our university and their host teachers have an opportunity to learn from our approach and research.

To explain the evolution of our work, we will tell our story from the beginning. Our initial efforts began in 2003 with a $10,000 grant through Temple University and the Inclusion Initiative for Higher Education. We approached the Karns City Area School District (a small, rural school district in western Pennsylvania) about serving as the host school for the professional development. The average graduating class is approximately 119. The rate for free and reduced-price lunches in the 2012–2013 school year is more than 40%.

The teachers and administrators of Karns City graciously agreed to allow the stipulations of the grant to be implemented at the Junior Senior High School. The grant provided for a research study that included seven special education and seven general education teachers at the high school level. We provided a total of 4 hours of training for these teachers on co-teaching in an inclusive setting. Focus-group interviews were also conducted with the teachers before and after the training.

The response by the teachers to the training on co-teaching and inclusion was overwhelmingly positive. The consensus of the participants was that more teachers

in the district needed this training. During the following summer, the school district offered the training to teachers on a voluntary basis. About 30 faculty members attended this summer training. These teachers felt the training should be received by all faculty members in the district. We were asked to provide additional professional development to the entire district during the 2004–2005 school year. This district has received two national awards: Sugarcreek Elementary was named a U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School in 2009–2010, and the high school first won a bronze rating in 2009–2010 in *U.S. News and World Report*'s Best High Schools rankings.

Over time, we have elaborated and expanded our training topics and sessions. For example, with the assistance of Dr. Monique Mawhinney, Director of Pupil Services for Hampton Township School District (HTSD), we began classroom observations with preobservation and postobservation debriefing sessions in this district. We have completed these visits at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. HTSD is located in western Pennsylvania, approximately 20 miles north of Pittsburgh. Although HTSD is a relatively small school district, with graduating classes of roughly 150 students, it has a larger-than-life reputation in Pennsylvania. With state assessment scores that routinely place it as one of the top five school districts in Pennsylvania, HTSD also has earned national recognition as an outstanding school district. The administration and school board of this district has a deep commitment to professional development.

We also value the collaborative relationship we have established with the Blackhawk School District. Shortly after we began our work with Hampton Township, we met a Blackhawk teacher in one of our graduate courses at Slippery Rock University. She mentioned our work with Hampton Township and Karns City to the Blackhawk administration. Since then, we have provided professional development and consultations to the co-teachers of the district for more than 5 years. Because of the progressive attitude of the teachers and administrators there, the Blackhawk School District is making great strides with efforts to increase levels of inclusive education.

Through word of mouth and presentations at state and national conferences, our involvement with other districts continued to grow. In an evolutionary process, we arrived at the qualities and concepts of education highlighted in this book. At an early point in our work to deliver training, we began to conceptualize the Co-Design Model for promoting collaborative and inclusive education. It is a flexible model that can meet the individual needs of teachers and students in each district and at every building and grade level.

In January 2007, we formalized our consulting efforts and established Keystone Educational Consulting Group, LLC (KECG). The group comprises more than 30 education and legal professionals dedicated to providing professional development and related services to school districts and other educational entities. KECG has trained and provided support to more than 60 such clients in Pennsylvania, Texas, Iowa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, including public and parochial schools, correctional facilities, alternative educational placements, and an Intermediate Unit (Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 of Pennsylvania). The consultants present their work at conferences and in journal articles, and a web site (http://www.keystone-educational.com) provides resource materials, contact information, and more for teachers, preservice teachers, and administrators.

Many school districts that use this training model credit the initiative for augmenting levels of inclusiveness in classrooms and raising achievement scores, as reflected in the following comments we have received in personal communications to KECG. One special education director wrote,

> Last year we were placed on tier 2, which placed us in approximately the bottom 10% of school districts in the state on the LRE [Least Restrictive Environment] Index. The LRE Index results for 2009–2010 have been released. I am pleased to announce that we have progressed from tier 2 to tier 3!

A specialist of Intermediate Unit (IU) 28 in Pennsylvania writes,

> I was at a Procedural Safeguards meeting at ARIN [ARmstrong and INdiana] counties IU 28 this morning and it sounded like every school district represented was working with your consulting group! They were all raving about how well the program is received and how it has helped teachers and instructional assistants.

Paul Kasunich, superintendent of Trinity School District in Washington, Pennsylvania, and former superintendent of the Blackhawk School District of Pennsylvania wrote,

> The Blackhawk School District has been in partnership with the Keystone Educational Consulting Group for 4 years. These professionals have been involved in training, consulting, and observing teaching staff and paraprofessionals at all grade levels. They have provided numerous resources, technological assistance and instructional strategies which proved invaluable. These strategies have had a positive impact on student engagement, a decrease in behavior issues as well as enhanced teacher performance in implementing differentiated instruction and co-teaching models. As a result, students have demonstrated an increase in class participation, work completion, personal confidence and the district has observed a gradual improvement in PSSA [Pennsylvania System of School Assessment] scores.

Christopher Stone, former principal of David E. Williams Middle School of the Montour School District located in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania, attested,

> Because of the training and professional development provided by this group, nearly 90% of our children with special needs are receiving their instruction in the general education classrooms. Without reservations, I would highly recommend the Keystone consultants to any school district that is interested in providing "realistic" training for teachers in the area of inclusionary practices.

Success for students in the classroom is our ultimate goal. Testimonials from teachers and administrators that attribute our training to help achieving results are quite a compliment. It gives us the motivation and inspiration to continue our research and work in the field. We take pride in our efforts with districts and try not to forget how hard it is to be in the classroom and meet all of the pressures felt by school administrators and faculty members.

We hope you enjoy reading this book. Whatever your role or grade level or content expertise, we hope the ideas presented here inspire you to promote successful, inclusive, and collaborative education that benefits all learners.

SECTION II

The Co-Design Model for Collaborative Instruction

CHAPTER 3

Explanation of the Model

Collaboration is a term that is often mentioned as a positive initiative within schools. Many education professionals speak of the favorable impact that collaboration has on the planning and delivery of instruction. If educators want schools to improve and students to reap the greatest benefits from instruction, it is essential that they seek input from fellow teachers from whom they can learn. Collaboration involves creating communities of professionals who work together to share ideas, solve problems, and promote positive changes that benefit students. Although there is no one right way to collaborate, effective collaboration requires mutual respect and trust, open communication, and the sharing of work to achieve a common goal.

When I was working as a building principal, I attempted to create an atmosphere in which teacher collaboration would drive the planning and instruction of school programs. Lesson planning, data analysis, and co-teaching were all addressed in a collaborative environment. Like many other administrators, I firmly believed the old adage that many heads are better than one. I felt that I was on solid ground in my effort to promote collaboration among the staff, even though the benefits were primarily of the "feel-good" variety. The staff enjoyed the opportunity to share ideas and materials, and the mutual planning time made the teachers happy. However, it was not until I began my doctoral work that I truly realized the impact that collaboration can have on teaching and learning.

I conducted a qualitative study of a school that had implemented a collaborative structure in 2003. After years of working in isolation in three separate buildings, the teachers were brought together in one building where their grade level could meet daily. This meeting time was used to establish program goals, plan instructional activities, share resources, and discuss student progress. The results of this research revealed six indisputable benefits from the efforts of collaboration:

1. One hundred percent of the study participants stated that their teaching had improved since the collaboration model was established. The teachers felt that the model gave them more support to try new ideas and fine-tune their activities to meet the students' needs.
2. Teachers agreed that the collaborative atmosphere expanded their repertoire of resources and promoted the use of recommended practices for instruction.
3. Continuity improved within the curriculum and instruction. The staff commented that they were all on the same page with regard to instructional planning and delivery.

4. The instructional focus shifted from the teachers to the children. The teachers acknowledged that their conversations began to focus more on student learning and on teaching to the students' learning styles.
5. Academic rigor increased dramatically as the teachers developed core competencies that they expected their students to achieve, as well as formative and summative assessments to evaluate student achievement.
6. The collaborative structure gave the teachers a greater sense of accountability. They felt more responsible for ensuring student success and more accountable to their peers for meeting school goals.

Clearly, the concept of collaborative instruction is not merely a simple, feel-good school initiative. In fact, an effective collaborative environment can reap benefits for both students and teachers that far exceed expectations.

By Wesley Shipley, Ed.D., Superintendent, Shaler Area School District
serving Shaler Township, Millvale, Etna, and Reserve Township, Pennsylvania

Collaborative instruction is an undeniable ingredient for successful education (Friend, 2011; Villa, Thousand, & Nevin, 2004; Werts, Culatta, & Tompkins, 2007). Gargiulo (2006) reports that the use of collaborative practices in schools is increasing. At some point in their teaching careers, it is likely that most educators will be expected to collaborate and co-instruct with other professionals. The Co-Design Model for collaborative instruction (Barger-Anderson, Isherwood, & Merhaut, 2010; Hoover, Barger-Anderson, Isherwood, & Merhaut, 2010) provides a means for support and professional development, along with strategies for implementation, to ensure that collaborative and inclusive efforts meet success.

Shade and Stewart (2001) stated that general educators in inclusive classrooms often find it difficult to select proper instructional strategies for students with disabilities. These researchers also found that lack of administrative support and planning time is a common problem. Often, schools implement inclusive practices expeditiously without providing proper training and support to the general education teachers (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003). The goal of collaboration in the educational setting is to achieve shared accountability for all students in an inclusive environment. Using the Co-Design Model as a framework for developing and implementing collaborative and inclusive initiatives can assist educators and administrators in accomplishing this goal.

The Co-Design Model is composed of nine elements. These elements are essential for realizing the model's maximum potential. The model also endorses four pathways that educators can use on a day-to-day basis to implement strategies and tactics within the collaborative environment. These pathways are research-based recommended practices that have proven successful in promoting achievement for all levels of learners. There are two analogies that are helpful to understanding how the elements and the pathways work together. The first is to think of the model as a brick building. The elements serve as the bricks and the pathways are the mortar used to hold the bricks together. In other words, the pathways are used to support the structure. The other analogy is that of a vehicle, as illustrated in Figure 3.1. The automobile represents the elements, and the pathways act as the gasoline that enables the car to get from Point A (i.e., the students' initial level of knowledge) to Point B (meeting new learning goals and objectives). In either example, the key to

success is understanding how to combine the implementation of the elements and pathways to work synergistically as one model.

These nine elements may appear separately in many classrooms. But when all of the elements are implemented simultaneously, they form the Co-Design Model. It is difficult to say whether one element is more important than another. Therefore, the

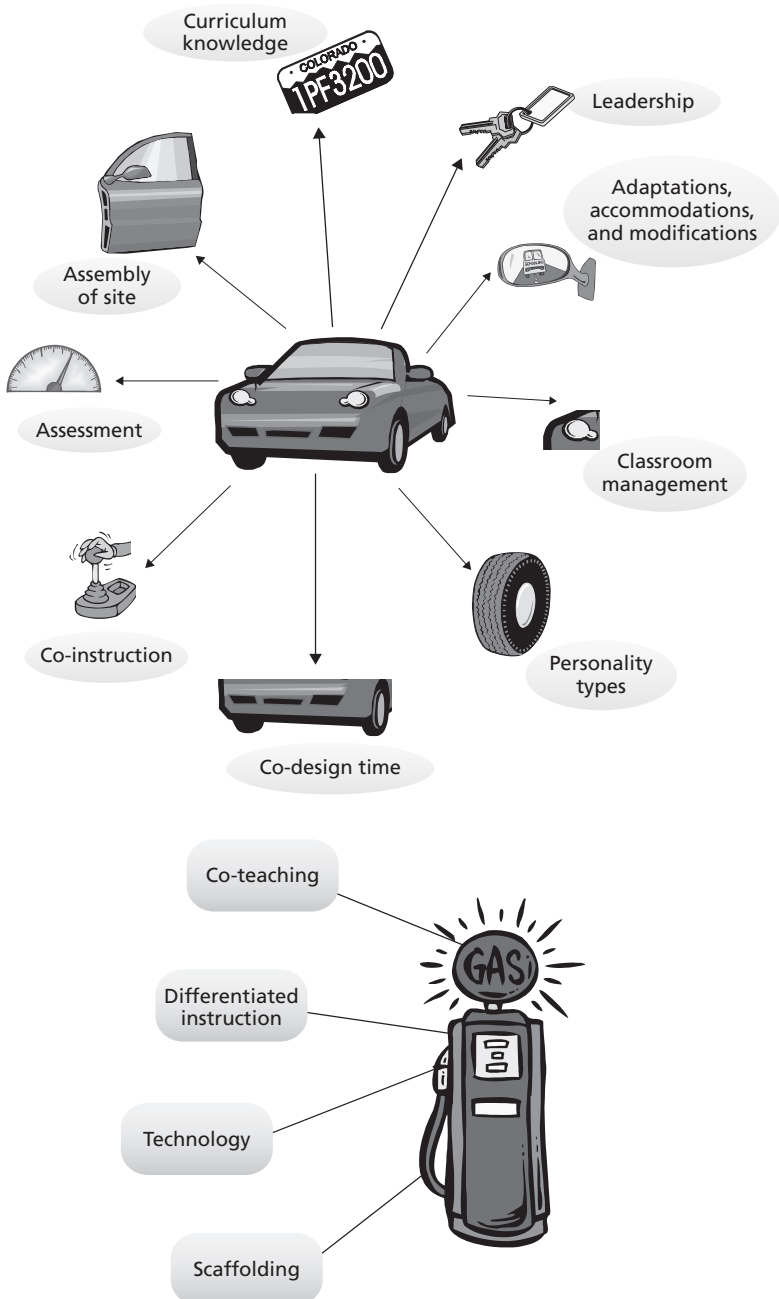

Figure 3.1. A visual analogy of the nine elements and four pathways of the Co-Design Model. (*Source:* Barger-Anderson, Isherwood, Merhaut, and Hoover, 2010.)

Co-Design Model stresses that all nine elements must be implemented and addressed; if one or more elements are left out, the participants risk compromising their ability to reach the highest level of collaborative success.

The *Co-Design Model* is defined as the interaction of professionals engaged in collaborative efforts who share in the obligatory responsibilities for the administration of instructional and noninstructional duties and tasks within an educational setting (Barger-Anderson et al., 2010). This means that the model takes the concept of collaboration in inclusive classrooms beyond just the implementation of common co-teaching models by promoting collaboration that extends beyond the instructional aspects of planning and executing lessons. The model emphasizes the need for reliable and effective collaborative approaches to classroom management, parental contacts, grading of homework, assessments, adaptations, and other components necessary to successfully operate a classroom (Barger-Anderson et al., 2010).

ELEMENTS OF THE CO-DESIGN MODEL

The nine elements of the Co-Design Model are

1. Leadership
2. Assembly of site
3. Curriculum knowledge
4. Co-instruction
5. Classroom management
6. Adaptations, accommodations, and modifications
7. Assessment
8. Personality types
9. Co-design time

Leadership

The element of leadership (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4) encompasses several of the other elements of the Co-Design Model as well as some of the pathways for implementation. For this reason, it is positioned as the first of the nine elements. Some advocates of the Co-Design Model argue that no educational initiative of any kind can succeed without the support of effective leadership by school and district administrators. The leadership element emphasizes the crucial need for administration to ensure sustainability, continued reinforcement, and a long-term commitment throughout the collaborative initiative.

In the Co-Design Model, the leadership element addresses issues such as providing the collaborative partners with common planning time and opportunities for professional development. It also addresses teacher evaluations. Specifically, the leadership element advocates enhancing teachers' professional growth via classroom observations by administrators and outside consultants, peer observations, and feedback on specific lessons. This support includes providing time for the administrators and consultants to conduct preobservation and postobservation conferences with the teachers, both individually and with their collaborative partners.

Gargiulo (2006) found that few general educators believe they have the basic foundation of knowledge needed to address the increasingly diverse needs of all learners in inclusive classrooms. Santoli, Sachs, Romey, and McClung (2008) accentuate that administrative support is necessary for the success of inclusive and collaborative education. Their research demonstrates that even though most teachers at the middle level feel that they receive sufficient support in most other areas, they do not feel that the administrative team allots enough planning time between the general educator and the collaborative partner(s).

Assembly of Site

Assembly of site (discussed in Chapter 5) refers to the organization of physical components within a shared educational venue, along with the promotion of collaborative practices via site management (Barger-Anderson et al., 2010). This element of the Co-Design Model addresses issues such as location of the teaching site, the arrangement of furniture and other items within the shared space, and promoting communication between the collaborative partners to help them plan these logistics. The physical setting for collaborative instruction may be a classroom, an auditorium, two classrooms split between two groups of students, or any other configuration. Even though no two schools are physically the same, lack of adequate space seems to be a common problem.

Gately and Gately (2001) and Villa et al. (2004) agree that the physical arrangement of a shared teaching site needs to be discussed between the collaborative partners. The assembly of site element also helps ensure that the physical setup creates a truly collaborative environment that promotes parity between the partners. Parity is achieved when all partners in a collaborative relationship feel a sense of value and contribution to the educational experience. Parity does not mean that all responsibilities are divided equally; rather, it recognizes that education professionals have individual strengths and differing areas of expertise (Friend, 2011; Villa et al., 2004).

The physical assembly of the classroom or site of instruction should send a clear message that the setting is a shared environment. For example, this may include providing two teacher desks and displaying the names and pictures of both teachers in the room.

Curriculum Knowledge

Curriculum knowledge (see Chapter 6) refers to the different backgrounds, knowledge, and skill sets that each teacher brings to the collaborative classroom. The general education teachers are trained and certified within their own content disciplines. The special educators are experts who are trained and certified in the discipline of special education. In many cases, the special educators may be certified or deemed highly qualified to teach in at least one additional content area. The Co-Design Model's curriculum knowledge element addresses issues such as resolving concerns about one co-teacher's possible lack of curriculum knowledge, providing the time required for teachers to learn curriculum, and ensuring that co-teachers respect each other's strengths, disciplines, and skills. The success of a collaborative teaching relationship may hinge on the level of content and subject area assigned. The content knowledge and skill sets of each partner may differ greatly depending on the class assignment (Friend & Hurley-Chamberlain, n.d.; Gately & Gately, 2001).

Because, according to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2011), the number of students with disabilities who receive their

education in inclusive environments is increasing, curriculum knowledge is an important element within the Co-Design Model. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 (PL 108-446) has given students with disabilities greater access to general education classrooms and to standardized assessments that evaluate acquisition of knowledge in the general education curriculum. IDEA also resulted in the implementation of teacher preparation guidelines to help ensure that students with disabilities receive an appropriate education in general education classrooms. The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (PL 107-110) provided opportunities for students with disabilities to have access to more inclusive environments because of assessment procedures. Required assessments of all students led to more access to the curriculum in the general education classrooms. It also addressed the need for teachers to be highly qualified in their content areas. When IDEA was reauthorized in 2004, it aligned with No Child Left Behind (Kight, 2008).

Like assembly of site, the curriculum knowledge element stresses the importance of parity between the collaborative partners. Respect for each other's skill sets is essential to helping the partners determine strengths within a curriculum. Also, the longer collaborative partners remain consistent with each other and with the same content, the more confident both partners become in all aspects of sharing a class assignment.

Co-instruction

Co-instruction (see Chapter 7) is defined as professionals engaged in consistent and routine collaborative efforts for the implementation of instructional practices within an educational setting (Barger-Anderson et al., 2010). The collaborative partners must not only allocate instructional time but also be committed to the initiative on a consistent basis. In other words, this element of the Co-Design Model goes beyond co-teaching to include dependable sharing of all classroom responsibilities. Co-instruction encompasses two processes: Not only does it include lesson execution but also addresses the realm of professionalism. Collaborative partners must be committed to both the success of the relationship and the overall success of the initiative. This commitment can be fostered through open communication of educational philosophies and beliefs. It is not necessary for all collaborative partners to agree on all issues. It is, however, important to promote open dialogue, understanding, and openness to compromise. Also, maintaining consistency of partners from year to year typically helps to strengthen a collaborative relationship. Building trust and comfort levels between the partners is another key consideration. The longer the collaborative pairs remain together, the more the relationships can grow.

Of course, there may sometimes be situations when partnerships need to be terminated. This does not necessarily mean that one (or both) of the teachers is incompetent or lacking skills as an instructor. Rather, the failure of the relationship may be the result of factors such as differences in personality types, educational philosophies, teaching styles, and approaches to behavior management and classroom management. Therefore, it is crucial to promote dialogue between co-instructors on issues that may create tension if not discussed in advance. Some of the most common co-instruction issues that are encountered during assistance to schools with implementation of the Co-Design Model include establishing common principles in areas such as classroom routines for transition times and homework policies. This area also encompasses professionalism between the two teachers. Items that may need to be discussed include cell phone use in class and the importance of coming to class on time—that is, cell phone use and prompt arrival *by the teachers*. Finally,

co-instruction includes sharing of instructional time. Teaching styles and philosophies should be communicated between partners at the start of the school year as well as throughout the year.

Classroom Management

The element of classroom management comprises two distinct areas: creating the collaborative environment and managing teacher–student relationships within that environment (see Chapter 8). The Co-Design Model emphasizes the importance of dialogue between co-instructors to agree upon rules, roles, responsibilities, and other important issues necessary for managing a shared classroom effectively. Some examples of potential problem areas collaborative partners may encounter include whether or not to allow food and drink in the classroom and managing noise levels. Research supports the importance of establishing common rules and routines. By agreeing on rules prior to the start of the school year, some difficulties may be averted. For example, it is important to agree upon the restroom pass policy and when it is appropriate to sharpen a pencil (Gately & Gately, 2001; Mercer, Mercer, & Pullen, 2010). This agreement helps the co-instructors manage the room more effectively and creates a sense of community.

It is essential for the collaborative partners to discuss their classroom management preferences with each other as soon as possible. If there is an opportunity for this to occur before the first day of class, that is recommended. However, in many cases teachers do not know their new class assignments until the first day of school.

Some students with disabilities may have individualized education program (IEP) situations that require a specific behavior plan. When this is the case, having two professionals in the classroom can be helpful in fulfilling the IEP requirements. Other times, a teacher may choose to implement individual or classwide behavior systems even if this is not required in a specific IEP. If a special education teacher is one of the collaborative partners, his or her expertise can be beneficial to the general education teacher in establishing these systems.

Communication is a significant and common component throughout the Co-Design Model, yet it seems to be especially important in this area. The classroom management element provides strategies to help co-instructors continue to maintain open discourse about the needs of all learners in the shared classroom environment.

Adaptations, Accommodations, and Modifications

There are many differing definitions for these terms in the educational arena (see Chapter 9). For purposes of the Co-Design Model, an *adaptation* is an umbrella term that refers to any type of change from the typical means in which a teacher would execute instruction or assessment. The actual way to realize the change is through either a *modification* or an *accommodation* (Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott, 1997; Smith, Polloway, Patton, & Dowdy, 2006; Thurlow, 2002). Whether the adaptation is a modification or an accommodation depends on the type of change being made.

Modifications involve the change of content and/or change in goals deemed appropriate for individual students (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, 2010; Smith et al., 2006). Accommodations, on the other hand, are changes that give students with disabilities equal access to the same curriculum and assessments as their peers without disabilities (Thurlow, 2002). In other words, accommodations enable students to demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge by working around the barriers presented by their disabilities (National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities, 2010). For example, providing a student with

supplementary aids and services, as stipulated within an IEP or response to intervention (RTI) plan, can be accomplished via accommodations and/or modifications.

As with the other elements of the Co-Design Model, the adaptations, accommodations, and modifications element stresses the need for open dialogue between the collaborative partners about educational philosophies and beliefs. This benefits the partners in the division of labor for completing and implementing the adaptations. It is also important for co-instructors to present adaptations to the students throughout the instructional process, not just at assessment time.

Assessment

The element of assessment (discussed in Chapter 10) as it relates to the Co-Design Model includes two types: formative assessments and summative assessments. Formative assessment consists of continuous evaluation, observations, and reviews that are used daily to provide teacher information and student feedback (Fisher & Frey, 2007). Summative assessment is conducted at the conclusion of a unit to determine the amount of learning that has occurred (Dodge, 2009). Mercer et al. (2010) state that both formative and summative data results should be used frequently to make data-driven decisions.

Assessment in the collaborative environment requires dialogue and agreement between the partners in terms of types and frequency of assessments. It is important to remember the reason for assessment: to gather data on student progress that will enable educators to make well-informed instructional decisions (Badgett & Christman, 2009; Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2004; Salvia, Ysseldyke, & Bolt, 2007). This element of the model helps ensure that appropriate preassessment and postassessment techniques are used to drive instructional planning, as well as to implement various assessment techniques for progress reporting.

Personality Types

This element of the Co-Design Model (see Chapter 11) focuses on understanding one's own personality type as well as a partner's type. Four types of personalities are presented. Both different and similar personality types, when paired together in a shared teaching environment, can be successful. The better teachers understand personality types and characteristics, the better they will be at understanding why people do certain things or act in various ways. Understanding personality types may also improve communication between partners, which is important because a collaborative teaching relationship is much like a marriage. Furthermore, a co-instructor in an inclusive classroom often has to work with more than one collaborative partner. Rohm (2004, 2008) found that understanding each other's personality types can make it easier for collaborative partners to work in tandem. Of course, for the professional with multiple collaborative partners, the task is more difficult. It takes effort and time to collaborate, communicate, and stay informed with all partners.

Co-design Time

The co-design time element (Chapter 12) stresses the importance of ensuring that collaborative partners have time for common planning. Unfortunately, this essential element is often lacking in collaborative education environments. In particular, research shows that common lesson-design time is needed (Gately & Gately, 2001; Hawbaker, Balong, Buckwalter, & Runyon, 2001; Santoli et al., 2008). The most difficult part of this element is finding the time for the collaborative partners to meet (Zigmond & Magiera, 2001). Ashton (2003) states that many co-teaching initiatives

give only minimal concern to ensuring meeting time between teachers for planning purposes. Therefore, the Co-Design Model encourages education professionals to be creative and think outside the box for ways to identify and find opportunities for common planning time.

THE PATHWAYS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CO-DESIGN MODEL

Once the nine elements of the Co-Design Model have been put in place to assist in establishing an environment for collaborative instruction, the four research-based pathways can be used to promote successful learning for all students in the inclusive classroom setting. These pathways are

1. Co-teaching
2. Differentiated instruction
3. Technology
4. Scaffolding

Co-teaching

The purpose of the Co-Design Model is to assist schools and school districts in meeting both collaborative and inclusive needs (Barger-Anderson et al., 2010). Because collaboration is a necessary ingredient in inclusive education (Friend & Bursuck, 2008), co-teaching is a logical and practical strategy to employ. Co-teaching models, when used appropriately, can move all students, with and without disabilities, toward academic achievement (Rice & Zigmond, 2000).

Co-teaching between general education and special education teachers is a frequently used model for delivering instruction in inclusive classrooms (Friend, 2011; Villa et al., 2004). However, Friend (2011) states that co-teaching occurs when education professionals share planning, instructional, and assessment duties for all students in the inclusive classroom. Under this broader definition, the co-teachers may be any two or more professionals who share responsibilities for meeting the educational and behavioral needs of the students assigned to their class roster. Thus, co-teachers can include not only general education and special education teachers but also specialists such as librarians, physical education teachers, computer teachers, art teachers, and therapists (e.g., speech-language, physical, and occupational).

The Co-Design Model promotes the use of five co-teaching models, based on the research of Marilyn Friend (2005, 2007, 2011). These models (discussed in detail in Chapter 13) are 1) team teaching, 2) one teach/one assist, 3) the parallel model, 4) the stations model, and 5) the alternative model. One model of co-teaching is not superior to the others. However, this pathway also encourages collaborative partners to avoid getting into a routine of only using one model.

Differentiated Instruction

This pathway (see Chapter 14) focuses on collaborative strategies for successfully presenting instruction to both students with disabilities and students without disabilities in the inclusive classroom environment. It can include differentiation in content, process, and teaching tools in order to meet the learning needs of all students. Tomlinson (1999) describes differentiated instruction as a means for teachers to help individual students learn as much as possible and as deeply as possible by recognizing that learning styles differ from one student to the next.

Differentiating instruction to accommodate a range of learning styles is a time-consuming process. However, the reward is worth the effort. High levels of student learning are possible via differentiation. It is important for the collaborative partners to start small when implementing this component of the Co-Design Model so as not to feel overwhelmed. Choosing one lesson to differentiate is a good way to start. The more co-instructors become familiar with the practice of differentiated instruction, the more effectively they are able to use it.

Because differentiated instruction is recognized as a recommended practice, many teachers have already been trained or provided with professional development opportunities to learn more about this technique. However, even if each of the co-teachers has a good individual understanding of differentiation, both must still learn how to use it successfully in a collaborative environment.

Technology

Prensky (2001) uses the term *digital natives* to describe the generation of students who are being educated in the early 21st century. Technology is a beneficial means of acquiring new skills for this generation of learners. Because these students respond to a multimodal approach to education, this pathway in the Co-Design Model focuses on strategies for using technology to provide differentiated instruction and make inclusive adaptations for students with disabilities (see Chapter 15).

Examples of ways to make technology useful for student learning in a collaborative environment include the use of WebQuests, live streaming, or even web-based game templates. Of course, some school districts have more technological resources than others. Nevertheless, use of technology with a collaborative partner can make it easier for teachers to amalgamate these resources into daily lessons.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding, a concept popularized by the work of Vygotsky (1978) and others, is an instructional strategy that helps a learner obtain new skills or information (see Chapter 16). Throughout the scaffolding process, and with the presentation of all new skills, the student is provided with support as needed (Carter, Prater, & Dyches, 2009). At first, support is provided at the learner's initial level of comprehension. As the student begins the acquisition of new content, some of the support offered at the start is removed. This strategy is designed to promote independence at each level of new learning. The effectiveness of scaffolding has been proven through research in many content areas (Beers, 2003; Bodrova & Leong, 2007; Smith & Tyler, 2010). The Co-Design Model promotes scaffolding as a means of helping students in inclusive classrooms achieve success. Because scaffolding lends itself to learning via social constructs, it is easily incorporated into a collaborative environment.

CONCLUSION

Research indicates that many teachers have fears concerning some aspects of implementing inclusion practices in the general education environment. Some of these fears stem from factors such as lack of knowledge about how to manage students with severe disabilities, the belief that inclusion will have a negative impact on the general education students, and concern that more work will be added to teachers' already full plates (Kavale & Forness, 2000). Santoli et al. (2008) report that many teachers do not hold the belief that students who are receiving special education services can be successful in inclusive placements.

The Co-Design Model offers a research-based approach to achieving a successful, collaborative, and inclusive program that meets the needs of all students. Potential benefits of using the model include a less restrictive environment for students with disabilities, higher levels of achievement for all students, increased student engagement, and greater access to highly qualified teachers in the content areas. The elements and pathways of the Co-Design Model intertwine to equip schools with the tools they need to provide appropriate education for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

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