This chapter suggests six key ways faculty members can support one another as they strive to successfully deliver the standards-based instruction described in Chapter 2.

The consultant system is the basis for all other systems in that it is the team planning component. Parallel teaching extends the planning to include grouping students among teachers with assistance from paraprofessionals for instruction. The last four systems, shown above as Keys M – P, are co-teaching systems. Co-teaching involves two or more adults instructing in the same space. Reducing isolation among teachers is one of the major keys to success in increasing learning options for all “at-risk” students (whether or not they have identified disabilities). Collaboration systems make it easier for teachers to instruct students with IEPs in the “least restrictive environment” so that students with disabilities have more meaningful opportunities to access and make progress in the general curriculum.

Studies have revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between school climate and student achievement. A healthy school climate is one in which teachers openly share their “failures” and mistakes, demonstrate respect for one another and constructively analyze and criticize practices and procedures.

(Fullen and Hargreaves, 1996; Deal and Peterson, 1990; Lortie, 1975)
Thinking through the options of how to use the staff more effectively

Kate, the principal, walks into the teachers’ lounge and joins the conversation about how Joe, the classroom teacher, and Molly, the intervention specialist, can work together as they attempt to meet students’ needs.

Joe: Well, Molly, I think that students with IEPs belong in an intervention room where they have a specialist to teach them. We aren’t trained. These kids need a lot of individual attention. I can’t give them that kind of attention in my math class, Kate.

Kate: Joe, I realize you can’t give them much one-to-one help. If one-to-one help was all they needed, we wouldn’t be scheduling them into your class. What all kids need, as much as an intervention specialist, is a strong math teacher presenting great lessons focused on the standards.

Joe: Well, Molly can do that in her resource room.

Kate: Actually, Molly can’t do this alone; there are English/language arts, social studies and science standards to consider, in addition to standards for math. Molly is a learning specialist, not a math specialist and these kids need exposure to both.

Molly: I can provide specialized instruction, but my worry is that I’m not teaching the things kids need to know and be able to do so that they can pass the graduation test. I’m having a hard time getting a handle on all those new standards.

Kate: Joe, remember two years ago when we decided it would be a good idea to track classes? How did you like 4th period with a class of 18 “I don’t like math” kids?

Joe: I hated it. My goal was to survive until fifth period. That’s why I don’t want Molly’s job.

Kate: You teach the same number of high-risk kids now as you did that year. The difference now is that some have IEPs. It just works better when kids who are confused by math are taught with kids who have figured out how to get past the barriers. Kids learn from each other in a room where the teacher plans regular problem-solving conversations, like you do.

Joe: I know that.

Kate: If you know that, then why don’t you think it works the same for kids with disabilities? Always teaching them with other kids who are having as much trouble as they are is one of the things that we should try to avoid. We know that this practice is not good for their learning, or for that matter, their feelings of self-worth.

Joe: Fine! I’ll give you that one, but let me tell you a horror story. My sister teaches science in an “inclusion” school. She had a class of 20 eighth-graders who were joined by 12 kids with disabilities and their teacher. Thirty-two kids in that room and over half in academic trouble! The principal said, “But you have two teachers so that’s a 16-to-1 ratio.” That’s what I have heard about “inclusion.”

Kate: Joe, that’s an example of poor administrative judgment. We know better than to load a class with lots of struggling learners, even if there are no kids with disabilities. Placing kids with IEPs strategically to keep the intervention staff from being spread too thin without overloading a classroom is tough, but we will do it.

Joe: So, if students with disabilities are scheduled into my room, is Molly coming with them?
Molly: If I have kids who can’t handle the math without a lot of extra support, I will come in and co-teach with you. Many of my kids don’t need to have me with them. All they need is a good teacher who makes appropriate accommodations.

Joe: How am I supposed to know what to do with the ones you send alone?

Molly: I will help you plan the accommodations. The accommodations we design together would be strategies you could use with many students in your class.

The conversation in this lounge is not unlike those of many schools figuring out new approaches for meeting the needs of students. Classroom teachers and intervention specialists are afraid they lack the time and expertise to meet the challenges of struggling students. Administrators are having a hard time figuring out how to make schedules work. Parents and students are concerned that the “nest” of special education settings is disappearing, and fear that classroom teachers might not have enough knowledge or worse, be insensitive, to the needs of students with disabilities.

Although each of these concerns is legitimate, many schools have figured out how to reduce the risks and maximize the gains. This chapter is designed to share the strategies and beliefs that have made people successful in sharing the responsibilities.

The sooner we believe that ALL teachers are capable of assisting ALL students in their learning journey, the more successful we will be.

Beliefs that make schools successful:

1. Teachers who plan and work in teams will serve more students effectively than teachers who work in isolation.

2. General education teachers can deliver services to students with disabilities, with or without an intervention specialist present, depending upon student needs.

3. Intervention specialists and paraprofessionals can assist general education students who are struggling, provided that IEPs are implemented as written.

Services for meeting individual needs can be delivered by any person capable of delivering them, in any space and at the time most appropriate for the student.
Questions and Answers

What is teaming for standards-based instruction?

It is the pooling of all faculty talents to:
1. Meet the needs of every student who may be at risk for some things on some days;
2. Challenge students who are gifted or students who have already met grade-level indicators;
3. Meet the needs of all students;
4. See that “struggling learners” are challenged without undue frustration.

It is not:
1. Scheduling two teachers into rooms that need only one;
2. Paying attention to one group of students at the expense of others;
3. Tracking students to make teaching and scheduling easier;
4. Over-accommodating so that students do not learn what they need to learn;
5. Under-accommodating that makes learning a frustrating experience.

Strongly considering the following ideas is critical to success:
1. Schedule staff or students where the “fit” is best for maximum student learning – regardless of labels;
2. Understand that techniques, teachers’ groups and teachers’ roles may need to change in response to student performance;
3. Everything is negotiable – except the common set of standards and the accountability to ensure that all students work toward them.

Rachel Quenemoen, National Center on Educational Outcomes
What does teaming to deliver standards-based instruction look like?

Since the needs of students and the readiness of the staff vary from one situation to another, teaming can take a variety of forms. Every school will need the following components in order to effectively address what has been outlined in the assessment map:

1. Every teacher in the building consults regularly with a team to plan a wide range of alternatives to meet all levels of student needs.

2. Teams spend 80 percent of their meeting time analyzing and planning instructional strategies that lead to high achievement instead of focusing on issues that do not link directly to improving achievement outcomes for all students.

3. Scheduling of students and faculty is flexible to ensure that, as needs change, each student is in the best possible learning environment with the most appropriate people. (See Keys D-P.)

4. A full range of services is available for all students, from the most restrictive (student is alone with a tutor or teacher) to the least restrictive (student is learning with grade-level peers) and all the options in between. (See Keys K-P.)

Who should be involved in planning and teaching?

Every faculty member should be involved, but not necessarily in the same way. No one person can complete the job of leaving “no child behind” without other talented people who can help plan, assess and implement quality lessons.

Teams may consist of pairs of teachers, several grade-level teachers, teachers of different disciplines or teachers from different departments, depending upon the structure and size of the school. When assigning intervention specialists or tutors to teams, it generally works best to assign them to departments in high schools and to grade-level teams in elementary schools. Not all teams need to be structured the same way even within the same school, as long as each team focuses on consistent planning and assessing of standards-based instruction.

Typically, the administrator assigns faculty to teams, but it would be wise to make these assignments based on productive matches. Involving teams in the interview process to make recommendations about potential new members is a wise choice. This increases the team’s commitment to the success of the new member. The new member tends to feel more accepted, knowing the group selected him/her.
Research by Friedkin and Slater (1994) indicates that best social friends do not necessarily work well together in teams, but matching people who are likely to build a basic respect for each other is essential to smooth-running teams.

When choosing or assigning teams, consider the following questions:

1. Does this match complement rather than mirror each member’s strengths?

2. Are the styles, experiences and training diverse enough to help each member meet the needs of a wider range of students than could be done alone?

3. Are team members likely to argue frequently and engage in discussion that does not benefit the students if this match is made? If so, don’t make the match!

Depending on the team option chosen, planning can take a minimum of one 30-minute session a week to a maximum of day-in day-out communication. The more planning time is effectively used, the fewer clock hours planning takes, and performance is greater. The first year is always labor-intensive, but improves quickly. (See “Finding the Time” on pages 87-88 and “Teaming Skills” on pages 80-84.)

Keeping the same teams together for three or four years is usually beneficial. This gives teams time to “fine-tune” and expand skills before moving on to new opportunities. Obviously, this “rule-of-thumb” has to be adjusted if the make-up of the student population indicates a change is needed before the end of this three- or four-year period.

The most critical resource is time. Time is essential to share ideas and plan, to assess and revise and to implement the design. (See “Finding the Time” on pages 87-88 for specific ideas.)

Another resource is training in teaming and planning. Great teams have an ongoing process for developing teaming skills (i.e., efficient meetings, conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies). There are many programs that can help with this, but one of the most effective ways of learning what to do is visit a team that has solved the challenges many new teams face.

A supportive administration is the third critical resource. Principals, supervisors and superintendents who set clear expectations, offer helpful suggestions, see that training is available and create schedules and room assignments that make planning and flexible scheduling possible are essential to the process.

How much time does it take?

What resources do we need?

Without administrative support and guidance, the job of teaming is doubly difficult.
What is it?

Consultant planning can be used by teachers planning any type of instruction. An art teacher planning an interdisciplinary unit with a second-grade teacher makes as much sense as a reading specialist designing regular reading classes with a seventh-grade teacher. The consultant system involves two or more teachers who consistently meet to:

1. Share and plan units of study based on the assessment map for the grade level or course;
2. Design and grade assessments together;
3. Look at student data and design additional practice and enrichment activities or different teaching strategies/methods;
4. Share materials and the creation of accommodations for standards-based lesson designs;
5. Help each other focus on standards for all students and on specially designed instruction for those students who need intensive intervention.

This system is the backbone of all the other systems because its purpose is to expand learning options for every room in the school through team planning. It can be used as an option by itself if:

1. The teachers have never teamed before and/or have no desire to co-teach at this point;
2. All students can learn by having teachers plan together but deliver the lessons to their own groups (assuming that regrouping with students from another room is not necessary, nor is a second instructor required).

**Key K: Consultant System of Co-Planning**

- **Parallel System**
  - Planning as a team
  - Cross-grouping students as a team and using the same plans.

- **Consultant System**
  - Planning as a team

- **Co-teaching System**
  - Instructing as a team in the same space

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The consultant system involves planning among several general education teachers, a group of intervention specialists or a combination of both, to act as resources for each other.

Paraprofessionals and tutors are included in the planning to increase the effectiveness of their support in classrooms.
Here is a picture

Background: Alice is a fifth-grade teacher with three students in her room who are struggling. Tamera and Daniel have had multifactored evaluations, but have not been identified as students with disabilities. Judy, for reasons unknown, seems “unmotivated.” Alice feels these students need more and her frustration level is rising.

Scheduling: Jerome, the intervention specialist, has been assigned to the fifth- and sixth-grade teams to provide planning and intervention assistance to ALL students (consultant system). Each grade level has four general education teachers on the team. Jerome is responsible for 11 fifth- and sixth-grade students, some with identified specific learning disabilities, some with cognitive disabilities and some with emotional disabilities. Figuring out how to spend his time each day is a major problem.

Who goes to who’s room? Based on assessment results, Alice and Jerome have decided that one student with a cognitive disability and two with specific learning disabilities fit well with Alice’s group. These students are able and willing to work on fifth-grade indicators with their peers, using the same types of accommodations as the three “at-risk” students in Alice’s room.

Jerome’s role: Jerome’s role is to help Alice design accommodations and help find appropriate materials. At first, Jerome and Alice decide only to plan together. Later, Jerome directly assists many students in Alice’s room who need pre-teaching or intervention. This pre-teaching or intervention sometimes happens in Alice’s room and sometimes in Jerome’s. As they change from simply planning together to cross-grouping students, their system changes to the parallel teaching system.

Here’s How: On Thursday afternoons, Jerome, Alice and Eric (another fifth-grade teacher) co-design lessons based upon the assessment map. The three teachers discuss options for helping all struggling students keep pace with the class. Some typical strategies are:

1. Redesigning worksheets to focus on only the key concepts from the standards;
2. Adjusting worksheet directions so that they are more straightforward, and adding graphics to provide more clarity;
3. Designing study guides, outlines or concept webs for some students;
4. Taping text for students who have reading difficulties;
5. Providing visuals for students to help them see relationships among concepts;
6. Providing “real life” examples and activities to help students see abstract ideas in perspective.

Jerome uses the jointly developed lesson plans for any students who will not typically be joining the regular classes. Jerome partners with another intervention specialist and a reading specialist to provide resource room services when he needs to be scheduled somewhere else.

Some of the time, students may need modifications or specially designed instruction that would not be reasonable to deliver in a general education classroom.

Jerome’s kids’ schedules:

The 11 students assigned to Jerome have been clustered in two of the four fifth-grade classes and two of the four sixth-grade classes.

- Three students are assigned to Alice on a regular basis with planning support from Jerome.
- Two are frequently taught in the resource room and in Eric’s fifth-grade classroom with Jerome’s in-class support.
- Two sixth-graders are in Beth’s class with only planning support.
- Four sixth-graders are in Sonja’s class with in-class support from Jerome or supervised assistance of the paraprofessional.
- Occasionally, Jerome will teach some of his students who need resource room instruction with Bill’s intervention class or with Rita’s Title I class to allow both Bill and Rita to do some in-class work with the general education teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alice: Room 5-1</th>
<th>Eric: Room 5-2</th>
<th>Beth: Room 6-1</th>
<th>Sonja: Room 6-2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 students in classroom includes three of Jerome’s students – full-time for instruction without Jerome</td>
<td>27 students in classroom includes two of Jerome’s students – part-time for instruction with Jerome</td>
<td>28 students in classroom includes two of Jerome’s students – full-time for instruction without Jerome</td>
<td>26 students in classroom includes four of Jerome’s students – part-time for instruction with Jerome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What about students who need resource rooms?
Jerome appreciates the care the principal has taken to ensure that all teachers share in the responsibility of teaching students with learning challenges. This not only takes students with disabilities into account, but other “at-risk” students as well. Four of the eight general classroom teachers have no students with disabilities, but are responsible for teaching a larger number of other students who are struggling.

Who does Jerome help?

Jerome and other specialists are included in the weekly planning for the grade level. Although Jerome gives and receives the same consultant support during team planning as the rest of the teachers, he typically has limited time to provide direct services to students in the four classrooms in which students with disabilities do not participate. The four classroom teachers and their students, however, benefit from Jerome’s consultation provided during weekly grade-level planning meetings. The option for extending services remains flexible as student needs change.

Tip:

Begin with a list of all certified and non-certified support personnel (i.e., intervention specialists, Title I teachers, tutors, paraprofessionals, literacy specialists). Assign these resource people so each team has concentrated service from someone who can help the team meet student needs, which allows intervention specialists to focus their attention on one team and have common planning time with the teachers on that team. All of the resource people need to maintain close contact with one another and share ideas and suggestions, as they will serve students with a variety of needs.

Scheduling students with disabilities in general education classes before assigning general education students to classrooms helps prevent potential conflicts and ensures quality services for all students.
Key L: Parallel Teaching System

While the consultant system is recommended for all teachers at all times because it ensures that teachers work in pairs or teams to plan, the parallel system extends the planning to a cross-grouping opportunity. This option may be used for all or part of a day, occasionally or daily.

What is it?

Teachers use the same instructional unit design described in Chapter 2, but deliver lessons in different ways to groups of students in one or more rooms. All teachers focus on the same essential understandings, indicators and assessments as identified on the assessment map. The two (or three) teachers then decide how to group the students and divide the teaching responsibilities.

How should we group students?

There are several choices for grouping in a parallel option. The one chosen depends on the purpose of the lesson. For maximum benefit, it is best to vary the types and structures of groups from lesson to lesson. Consider the following options:

1. *Interest groups:* The main purpose for interest grouping is to maintain motivation and attention of students. When students study what they already find interesting, motivation is less of an issue (e.g., “we are studying explorers; choose one on the list who interests you.”) Choices are limited to topics that fit the purpose of the lesson.

2. *Readiness or skill groups:* Students are grouped because they share the same needs for instruction (i.e., enrichment, practice, re-teaching of a specific skill). This is often an excellent choice for delivering specific interventions, but must be used cautiously. Slower progress can result due to lack of appropriate models for “at-risk” students and the belief that they “can’t” because they are the “low group.” Thus, skill grouping should be used to close the skill gaps as quickly as possible, so that students with skill deficits do not continue to demonstrate the need for intervention.

3. *Style groups:* Students who share favored ways of learning (i.e., auditory, visual, kinesthetic, concrete, abstract, competitive, cooperative), often work well together. At other times, a combination of styles may provide richer learning experiences.

4. *Random groups:* Gathering a variety of viewpoints or possibilities for problem-solving might best be accomplished by random groups. This gives students an opportunity to experience learning not considered in the other grouping patterns.

Over-emphasis of skill grouping can lead to in-class tracking, which often results in students sinking to the lowest common denominator.

Lowering expectations for a group often results in watering down and slowing down the curriculum, thus widening the gap that already exists.
What about tracking?

One group of administrators defined tracking as keeping any group of students together for more than eight days. Of course, this definition may not be a "research-based" definition of tracking, but it certainly helps teams stay flexible and understand the importance of the variety of grouping options.

Here's a picture of parallel teaching

**How it helps?**

Bob: I have several struggling students in my third-period science class. I've done some intervention and what I'm trying isn't working. Think we could strike a deal? I could help you get a handle on the science standards and you could help me get through to the kids who do not receive special education services.

Molly: I think that could work well.

Bob: I heard that you can extend intervention services to any kids who need it as long as you see that the kids with IEPs are meeting their goals. Is that right?

Molly: Yes, it is. Even though my certification does not really allow me to plan science lessons for general education kids without you, I can co-plan and co-teach with you.

The truth is, I have five students with specific learning disabilities who need to learn science concepts with their peers. I might have to pre-teach some concepts for a few of them, but I think it will be beneficial. In fact, you could send the students who are struggling to my room for the pre-teaching or I could do a pre-teach in your room.

Bob: I think Susan and Anthony would be reluctant to go to your room for help and their parents might have serious concerns about it. We'd better do this in my room.

Molly: What if you presented short lessons and then turned it over to me to break the kids into two task groups? I'll take one group and you take one. Putting me in a position of authority with mixed groups for a few days may take away the label as the "special" teacher. I'll have a better chance of being able to help everyone that way. It will also help the kids with disabilities feel less self-conscious about having me in there.

Bob: Are you saying we shouldn't group by skill needs?

Molly: I recommend that we start grouping by interest or even randomly, until we get over that stigma hurdle. Later, we can group for skills, because we both know skill groups can benefit our students.

Bob: I'm seeing this partnership as having more potential than I had expected. I didn't realize you would share the responsibility for teaching general education students with me.
Molly: Actually, if I look like any other science teacher, students will accept my help without reluctance, including the ones who have IEPs. Chances are, the accommodations your kids need will be similar to the ones I’ll be making for the students who also receive specially designed instruction. The added bonus is I get to see a science expert teach to the standards, so when I help kids I will have a better idea of what’s expected.

Bob: Sounds like a win-win to me!

Parallel in multiple rooms:

Molly: After we are comfortable with this step, we can consider setting up a study lab in the resource room as another option.

Bob: How does that work?

Molly: Projects, study assignments, computer work and skill groups can be scheduled in my room for application of the concepts being learned in your room. We will schedule some kids, and others can have drop-in privileges for working in the lab when their presence is not required for a class lecture. That option will have to wait, however, until everyone is comfortable with my new role as the study-lab teacher.

Here’s another picture of parallel teaching, but this time, without an intervention specialist as a partner

Background: Donna and Juanita teach second grade in a school with 12 general education teachers and Erin, the only intervention specialist. They believe parallel teaching will help them find more time to intervene with students who are not meeting indicators. Erin provides consultant-planning services to students, so the two second-grade teachers decide to try parallel teaching on their own for a 75-minute period each morning.

Planning: Donna and Juanita use the indicators from their assessment maps as a basis for planning. They will both focus on an integrated weather unit that includes the science, math and language indicators that involve observing, measuring, recording, predicting and drawing conclusions.

Consultant: They design the assessments, rubrics and activities together and get additional ideas from Erin. Erin will gather some picture books and tapes for the children who are struggling with reading. She will also create study guides for students who need step-by-step directions.
Every day from 9 to 10:15 a.m., Donna and Juanita use parallel teaching. Classes go back to their regular schedule for the rest of the day.

During the first three days, Donna teaches demonstration lessons and provides practice exercises on measurement skills with Class A. Juanita engages Class B in conducting investigations involving measuring and recording wind speed, rain and temperature. After three days, they switch classes and repeat the same lessons for the opposite class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donna – Measurement Skills</th>
<th>Juanita – Lab Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:35</td>
<td>9:00 – 9:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:40 – 10:15</td>
<td>9:40 – 10:15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the next seven days, Donna’s job becomes one of instructor. For 35 minutes, she teaches skills, making use of data collected during Juanita’s class, now referred to as the lab (i.e., adding and subtracting temperatures, writing observations in the journal, recording the rain data on a graph, drawing conclusions and making weather predictions from the observations and patterns). Donna does formal lessons using textbooks, demonstrations and lecture/response formats.

When students go to the lab during the last 35 minutes of the session, they use the skills taught by Donna to practice and/or collect the information assigned for the next day’s lesson. Juanita’s job is to coach as she moves around the room helping and explaining the tasks to students who have difficulty remembering what Donna explained. Juanita often replaces the original assignment with more challenging work for students who demonstrate that they don’t need as much practice. She also pulls groups of students together for mini-lessons when she or Donna identify students who need re-teaching or different teaching strategies or methods to learn concepts.

At times, the teachers start class with a double-class lesson and then divide the group into two or three subgroups. One teacher may move her skill group to another room to provide more space and keep the noise level to a minimum. If noise and space are not problems, they may teach two groups in the same room while a third group is working on an independent assignment. This choice decreases wasted time required by moving from room to room.

This option has many variations in terms of number and types of teachers working together, places where instruction is delivered, and ways to group the students.

Parallel teaching gives students opportunities to hear the same concepts coming from two (or more) teachers using different styles and materials. Teachers often decide to take turns in instructing and coaching. This method gives both teachers the opportunity to gain experience with both types of roles.
Keys M, N, O and P: Four Variations of the Co-Teaching System

Key M: Speak and Help

The biggest advantage of this option is the rapid collection of data by a trained professional. With two teachers in the room, it is fairly easy to use on-the-spot assessment to determine levels of student achievement and what the teachers need to do to respond. Data-driven decision-making is the hallmark of standards-based teaching.

In “Speak and Help,” one teacher presents and the other informally assesses by recording responses during class, watching how well students begin assignments, listening to how well they work in pairs or groups and checking for understanding during independent work time.

Tip:
It is important for the helping partner not to distract students by talking or walking around when they should be listening. It is just as important for the speaking partner to limit the lectures to short (six-14 minute) sessions followed by group discussions or practice exercises so the helping partner has the opportunity to assess student thinking.

Key N: Speak and Chart

“Speak and Chart” is a particularly strong model for teachers who are unaccustomed to working together, especially if one partner feels unsure about the content. This option also can be used with paraprofessionals or with students as the charting partner.

In “Speak and Chart,” one teacher presents the material in a verbal format, while the second teacher presents visually. The visual presentation can be done in several ways. A few ideas would be:

1. Modeling note-taking on the board or overhead;
2. Creating a concept web to point out relationships;
3. Demonstrating a science investigation;
4. Modeling the steps by working problems on the board;
5. Recording student responses for all to see;
6. Acting out the concepts.

Tip:
The charting teacher also will use fading with this procedure. Drawing blanks where key words need to be inserted begins to encourage students to do more than just watch and copy. As students become more proficient, the blanks become longer until they no longer rely on the teacher as the primary note-taker.

Kindergarten and first-grade students’ notes tend to take the form of pictures and rebus sentences, but older students should benefit greatly from this note-taking system as well.
Key O: Speak and Add

With this model, one teacher presents the key ideas as the second teacher gives examples, stories or jokes that reinforce the key points. Another option is for one teacher to read a textbook version and the second teacher to read a condensed version of a story.

“Speak and Add” gives both teachers a chance to monitor student responses as the partner teacher presents.

The “add” partner may have the same subject matter expertise as the “present” partner, but it is not essential in this model. It is essential that teachers working together develop rapport and have time to design a well-planned lesson.

Key P: Duet

Both teachers are responsible for teaching parts of the lesson. One teacher may present study skills, while the other delivers the content requiring the use of these study skills.

Example:

- Carlo is the reading intervention specialist. He will be co-teaching with Ron, who is the social studies teacher. Carlo begins the instruction by modeling and explaining how to take split-page notes.
- Ron teaches the first half of his lesson within nine minutes. He stops and turns instruction back to Carlo.
- Carlo asks the students to stop taking notes on the left side of the page and concentrate on creating webs or illustrations on the right side of the page that summarize the written notes. This forces the students to rethink what Ron has presented. Students then quickly compare notes and illustrations with a partner, which gives them another opportunity to fine-tune their understanding.
- Ron completes the second part of his presentation.
- Carlo repeats the “illustrate and compare” strategy and prompts the students to write a summary statement for the lesson at the bottom of the page.
- Ron announces that tomorrow’s class will begin with an open-note quiz, which will, again, require students to re-read and review their notes.

This example takes advantage of the strengths of both teachers, while demonstrating the application of study skills in context. Duet is the most complex version of co-teaching. Like the “Speak and Add” option, both teachers must have rapport that allows an easy flow of “give and take” as they teach together. This flow does not happen unless teachers have time to create an organized plan for the lesson. Duet does not work for all co-teaching teams. It is often easier for teachers to begin with “Speak and Help” and “Speak and Chart,” before they move to “Duet.”

Most teaching teams quickly come to the conclusion that a combination of all the key systems makes sense. Whatever options teachers use, all models require pre-planning and attention to grade-level indicators. Each format is much more likely to help faculty meet student needs than systems that keep teachers in isolation.
Role of Paraprofessionals

Care must be taken in assigning tasks to paraprofessionals. Recently, guidance has been offered that helps educators avoid the “traps” often associated with paraprofessional assignments to students (Giangreco, 2003).

**Overuse of paraprofessionals can have the following pitfalls:**

1. Teachers can become overly-dependent on someone else to do much of the work.
2. The paraprofessional becomes a “substitute” for a certified or licensed teacher.
3. The service becomes difficult to discontinue, even if the student is not improving as a result of the service.
4. Students become “prompt-dependent” or specific person-dependent.
5. Constant “caretaking” of a single student can be embarrassing to the student and gives the impression to peers that the student is helpless.

**Suggestion guidelines for assigning one-to-one paraprofessionals:**

1. Focus on classroom paraprofessionals instead of one-to-one assignments.
2. Ensure that paraprofessionals stay close to single students only when it is necessary.
3. Paraprofessionals should be involved with assisting many students in the classroom to decrease the possibility that the student will become dependent, and to prevent the “stigma” often associated with paraprofessional assistance.
4. Keep paraprofessionals involved in the planning to take full advantage of the skills they may bring.
5. Remember that if paraprofessionals are not certified teachers, they may not be assigned the responsibility of planning instruction.
6. Include paraprofessionals in professional development activities.
7. Establish criteria that can be used to track student growth in independence and record data to support findings.
8. Assign one-to-one services with a specific start date, a phase-out plan and an ending date.
9. Ensure that one-to-one is provided only at times and in places where it is needed, and include this information in the student’s individual plan.
10. Assign the paraprofessional to the student for no more than two years to avoid personal dependency issues.
Teaming Skills

With any of these options for collaborative work, the potential is great, but the power remains dormant unless there is an atmosphere of respect and professionalism. According to Fullen and Hargreaves (1996), to be effective, team members must support one another by:

1. Openly sharing failures and mistakes;
2. Demonstrating respect for each other;
3. Tactfully and constructively analyzing and criticizing practices and procedures.

By starting with an agreed-upon assessment map, many of the basic decisions about what will be taught have already been decided (Chapter 1). Teachers working together as a design team to plan units of study that account for student diversity is a powerful strategy (Chapter 2). What remains is the discussion of roles, responsibilities and procedures for working as a team to deliver the instruction.

Spot the dysfunctional behaviors in this scenario:

Karen: I think we need to discuss the fact that our team meetings haven’t started on time once this month.

Jay: You’re not going to get yourself upset about a few minutes now and then, are you?

Karen: I wouldn’t be upset if it were only now and then. It started out being three or four minutes and now we’re consistently five or six minutes late.

Betty: This isn’t so bad. I worked on the fourth-grade team last year and you want to talk about late meetings…

Karen: I didn’t say we were the only ones with problems. I just want to get this resolved.

Jay: I guess we’ll just have to start charging a quarter every time someone is late for a meeting. Here, I’ll put in a dollar in advance to take care of the next four meetings, just in case.

Karen: Very funny!

The good thing about this conversation is that the team members did not totally ignore or deny the fact that there were problems. The key dysfunctional behaviors in this scenario are poor listening skills and lack of advance agreements about roles, responsibilities and procedures. This kind of problem can be avoided with the development of good communication skills.
Communication

Reflective listening is key to effective problem-solving and quality communication. The best advice for good listening is to:

1. Avoid making interfering statements when someone needs to make a point (i.e., judging, disagreeing, joking, threatening, “I did that and it was worse than your situation” stories, advising or blaming). Interfering statements generally tell the speaker that you have stopped listening and have taken the spotlight from them.

2. Be sure the speaker knows that you understand the problem before you try to solve it. Paraphrase what you think the speaker meant both with his words and with his non-verbal cues. Wait until the speaker acknowledges that you are “on target” before continuing with your side of the conversation.

3. Ask clarifying or probing questions in ways that keep the speaker in control of the conversation. Be careful that questions are not sarcastic or are really statements in question form. (“You certainly don’t mean that, do you?” is most likely a judgment – not a true question.)

If these three guidelines had been followed, the previous conversation might have gone more like this:

Karen: I think we need to discuss the fact that our team meetings haven’t started on time once this month.

Jay: You are upset about starting late.

Karen: Well, upset may be a little strong. I guess you might say I’m concerned that we are wasting team time and it seems to be getting worse.

Betty: You’re right. None of us has time to waste waiting for meetings to start.

Karen: I am not implying that there aren’t good reasons for people coming in late. I just think we need to talk about how we can change this pattern. Do we need to meet at a different time? Do we need to make a firmer commitment to being here on time? Should we just not wait for people who are late and proceed with the agenda? We need to brainstorm solutions and come up with a plan.

Betty: I agree. It’s not about pointing fingers, just fixing the problem of wasted time. That seems reasonable even if it is going to be difficult to solve.

By allowing a distraught member to continue to hold the “spotlight” until he/she can fully express the problem, the team is more likely to avoid unmanaged conflict.
Resolving Conflict

Being honest about troublesome issues, as Karen was, takes real courage. The fact that she could freely speak about these issues said a lot about the integrity of the team members. She obviously felt safe to express an unpopular option without fear of retribution. Team members who learn to trust each other are ones who solve problems constructively.

Having concerns and refusing to discuss them with the people who are directly involved and can change these issues is destructive to the team. A good ground rule is:

People who have concerns must talk directly to the people who have the power to solve these concerns. If a team member talks to someone other than the persons involved, that person should ask, “Have you already talked to ____? If not, when are you planning to do so?”

Talking behind other team members’ backs solves nothing and generally undermines trust among team members. Taking part in this type of conversation is just as bad as starting it. If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem.

It is also destructive to the problem-solving situation by using defensive or avoiding behaviors as demonstrated in the first dialogue.

Ways to Reduce Conflict

A good way to begin a relationship is to set rules before anyone has a chance to be an offending party. Here is a suggested strategy:

1. Each person makes a list of “pet peeves” about working in a team. Such a list might include: arriving late for meetings constantly, leaving coffee cups around the work area, telling stories about how you worked on another team, getting off-task during a work session, etc.

2. The team then designs a set of rules to avoid potential problems. The rules should address:
   a. How the meeting will be planned, scheduled and reported;
   b. How the meeting and team roles and responsibilities will be assigned;
   c. How classrooms or planning areas will be made to feel more like common space than “my room, my stuff – your room, your stuff;”
   d. How personal space and furniture will be assigned to each member;
   e. Which materials and supplies are common property and which are not;
   f. How the team will keep meeting space reasonably clean;
   g. What meeting behaviors will, and will not, serve the team well;
   h. How conflicts will be resolved;
   i. What decision-making processes will be used.
Common Pitfalls of Beginning Co-Teachers in Sorting Out Roles

The major complaints of intervention specialists when they first begin working in general education rooms are:

1. I am being treated as if I am the teacher’s assistant;
2. I am asked to design accommodations on the spot;
3. I don’t know what we are doing until I walk in the door;
4. The classroom teacher wants to call all the shots;
5. The classroom teacher lectures most of the time so there is nothing for me to do.

The major complaints general education teachers tend to express about intervention specialists are:

1. He/she just sits in the back of the room while I teach;
2. He/she probably doesn’t have time to do anything that requires planning, so I just let him/her provide a “bandage” approach for kids who are having trouble when they are doing seatwork;
3. He/she is constantly interrupting me when I am trying to teach a lesson.

Too much or too little initiative is a problem either way. In her book, Interactions: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals (2002), Marilyn Friend offers some conversation starters to avoid misunderstandings. Administrators should encourage teachers to talk about these topics:

1. Describe your ideal situation in terms of your role and my role as we co-teach;
2. Describe your idea of an ideal teacher or team for co-teaching (if you think 45-minute lectures are great and he/she thinks the investigation method is the only way, you have some “meeting in the middle” to do);
3. Describe jobs you would hate and which jobs you would really enjoy;

Suggested universal “codes of conduct” for team members:

1. Listen with an open mind.
2. When problems arise, seek suggestions from team members and outside sources.
3. Speak honestly and with candor.
4. Come to closure on team decisions and support them as your own.
5. Never make another team member feel inferior, even if there is a problem.
6. Give sincere and deserved observations and suggestions about each other's work.
7. Address conflict with an individual directly, constructively and confidentially.
8. Share the leadership position with other team members.
9. Spend most of your team time on solutions instead of “admiring the problems.”
10. If nothing can be done about a problem, help each other cope and work around it.
11. Call each other on violations of any agreed-upon rules.
4. Describe your favorite topics and skills to teach;
5. Describe the greatest strengths you bring to this team;
6. Describe your biggest flaws that I should be aware of to help avoid problems or misunderstandings;
7. Describe help you would like from me as we begin this teaming relationship;
8. Discuss whether both teachers’ names should be on the door and on newsletters;
9. Discuss procedures for classroom management that we can agree to use;
10. Discuss how much noise and movement each person can tolerate;
11. Discuss how free each teacher is to “chime in” as lessons are being presented;
12. Discuss how parent calls, conferences or complaints will be handled;
13. Discuss what the basic classroom rules will be;
14. Discuss what the standards are for an excellent writing paper at our grade level;
15. Discuss how we will share grading responsibilities. (Note that both teachers must be responsible for the evaluation of the student work or the students will perceive only one person as the “real teacher.”)

**Agreeing on roles and rules is important to a working relationship, but establishing and maintaining trust is critical. Both teachers must contribute equally, but not necessarily in the same way. How teachers define “equal” is up to them, but if one defines and the other simply complies, there will be trouble ahead. Administrators play a key role in encouraging discussion around roles and rules for co-teaching.**

**Leadership that Empowers Teams**

Identify the leaders’ attitudes and practices that could demoralize faculty teams in the following scenario:

**Nancy:** I feel like the weight of the world is on my shoulders since the last set of scores was published. Central office is really on my case.

**Ernie:** I know. My scores were even worse than yours and the staff is blaming the kids and their parents. It really is difficult to teach kids whose parents can’t or won’t help, but we have kids from homes where the parents are very involved and some of these kids are failing, too. When I mention this, the staff seems to get even more defensive.

**Nancy:** Been there, done that. I really have good people. Some are great, but they seem to be dragging themselves through the days lately. Pep talks work for a short time. Grafton District even tried paying incentives, but that had limited results and about broke the bank.

**Ernie:** The problem is what’s going on at Conquest School. They have gained between five and nine points for the last three years running and their community is just like ours. I don’t know how they’re doing that!
**Bernice:** They must have a far better staff. Mine were bolting for the door 10 minutes after the kids were gone until I started the sign-in policy. I really hit the ceiling one afternoon when an irate parent came in to talk to a teacher who had left five minutes early. What kind of professionalism is it when people are counting down the days to every vacation and retirement date?

**Ernie:** Lots of our “lounge talk” is about the “count-down to Friday,” but I have to admit that I feel that way too many days. The problem I find even more disturbing is the teachers know the state test is based on the standards, but many of them are still going page-by-page through the textbook or teaching old units that aren’t in their course of study. If they think that this way is so effective, why are our scores down? I think we need one textbook series and a weekly pacing guide like some districts have and personally make sure the teachers follow it. That’s the only way to get some of these people on board.

**Bernice:** I have to agree that if they all go off in their own direction, it creates a mess for the kids. Those teachers who are really talented at making resource material match the standards hate being tied to a pacing guide, but we can’t very well say that some have to follow it and others don’t. Grievances will be filed for sure.

**Ernie:** It’s a shame to set policies like your sign-in procedure because of a few offenders. You probably ticked off the whole staff because of the actions of the five or six repeat offenders and 10 others who would back them if you dared to call them on it. We have to be fair and treat everyone the same, just like the teachers have to do in their classrooms.

**Nancy:** I really feel like there are some better ways of improving achievement than creating more bureaucracy. One of my teachers has a friend who teaches at Conquest and she said they have an intervention period every day. I’m considering doing that in my building next semester.

Although these administrators are well-intentioned and concerned about the students, the problematic thinking in this conversation will probably do more harm than good. These solutions are most likely creating as many problems as they are solving because:

1. When leaders think of significant school problems as their responsibility to solve alone, staffs tend to feel that their input doesn’t matter;

2. Focusing on problems and “who is to blame” tends to bring out defensive behaviors and excuses for poor results;

3. Leaders who buy into the idea that “we can’t make a difference” promote feelings of helplessness and justify the reluctance to change;

4. Leaders who commiserate with each other about problems tend to reinforce their own feelings of helplessness and justify their own reluctance to focus on solutions instead of the problems;

5. Creating universal rules and procedures to fix the problems of a few fosters feelings of resentment;

6. Bureaucratic fixes to problems open the door to sentiments such as “if it doesn’t work, it’s not my problem;”
7. Leaders who don’t encourage people to solve their own problems by providing the necessary time and resources set the stage for apathy and indifference;
8. Leaders who take credit for ideas and successes of others spawn feelings of resentment and distrust.

The bottom line is, whether you are the principal, superintendent or teacher leader, your actions and reactions set a tone and send a message about who owns the power. You either energize or demoralize teams through the choices you make as you address problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demoralizing Messages</th>
<th>Energizing Messages</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I am in control here.</td>
<td>1. We can solve things by working together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Be quiet and do as you are told.</td>
<td>2. Your job and your opinions are valued here.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The buck stops on my desk so I have the last word.</td>
<td>3. We share responsibility so we will “win or lose” together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The scores and looking good are the main goals here.</td>
<td>4. We will set clear, specific goals to improve student achievement and hold ourselves accountable for them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. If you fail, we’ll find out who’s to blame.</td>
<td>5. We will admit mistakes and help each other find new solutions.</td>
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</tbody>
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Great leaders encourage others to be responsible for solving their own problems, but are careful and skillful as they turn power over to teams that are at an adequate stage of readiness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*Beginning Teams</th>
<th>Novice Teams</th>
<th>Advanced Teams</th>
<th>Expert Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generally need help defining the problems, setting team goals and deciding how to monitor progress</td>
<td>Need a balance of direction and encouragement as the going gets tough</td>
<td>Need less direction and more feedback about results</td>
<td>Need feedback as well as new challenges to tackle</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Great leaders encourage others to be responsible for solving their own problems, but are careful and skillful as they turn power over to teams that are at an adequate stage of readiness.

The best advice for both leaders and team members is to intentionally send massive amounts of what Dr. William Purky, author of Invitational Learning, visualizes as “Blue Cards.” These are things we do and say and the environment we develop that makes people feel welcome and respected. At the same time, everyone must reduce the number of “Orange Cards” that flow. “Orange Cards” represent the things we say and do that are hurtful and make people feel alone or dishonored.

Since all of our influence depends on how “blue” our bank accounts are, we want to maintain the “bluest” environment possible. Every “orange card” takes away 12 “blue cards.” Knowing this helps us better understand both adults and children who seem uncooperative. Maybe it is an “orange account” that is causing the problem. We may have to make the first “blue card” move to “mend fences” or to “build a bridge” to cooperation.

The only time you get to coast is when you are going downhill. None of us can afford that.
Finding the Time

The universal complaint of most teams is the lack of time they have to do all the things that need to be done. Unfortunately, there is no single method to solve this dilemma, but there are some ideas that have been implemented with success in many schools:

1. Schedule common planning time by sending the entire group of students to fine and applied arts at the same time (i.e., art, music, physical education, health, band and computer);
2. Use district inservice days for team planning (note that if there have been abuses of this time in the past, a product of the team planning time might be requested for team members to show evidence that this time was used effectively);
3. Use early releases or delayed start times to develop curricular plans;
4. Have a team of floating subs who move from team to team every hour or so;
5. Hold monthly assemblies that part of the staff supervises, while other teams plan;
6. Arrange for “Big Buddy” classes (e.g., first and fourth grade) that meet once a month for a joint class where the fourth-grade team conducts the classes, while the first-grade team meets. The next month, they switch;
7. Plan a strategy similar to the “Big Buddy” system, but schedule joint field trips where one grade hosts the trip, while the other grade plans;
8. Agree to “banked” time. If the teacher day is 15 minutes before and after the study day, agree to meet for 30 minutes on Monday in return for leaving 15 minutes earlier on Friday;
9. One district contracted for three inservice days during which teachers who agreed to take advantage of this opportunity were paid $20 per hour. This provided money and time for committees, grade levels and departments to meet outside the school day or school year.

Typically, teams who truly are dedicated to working together can figure out a variety of ways to schedule the time. In most cases, it is not that the time cannot be scheduled, it’s that people do not choose to use their time this way.

Another way to gain time is to use the time you have more efficiently. Many teams save a great deal of time by:

1. Beginning and ending meetings promptly as scheduled;
2. Having a specific agenda for each meeting;
3. Posting the agenda several days before the meeting so people come prepared;
4. Organizing a timed agenda (each agenda item has a specific number of minutes that is strictly adhered to, thus keeping the meeting moving and on target);
5. Taking minutes, thereby, avoiding miscommunication and conflict;
6. Assigning roles and responsibilities to each team member during meetings (i.e., task master, timekeeper, recorder, critical friend, peacemaker, process observer);
7. Keeping track of what percentage of each meeting is spent on planning and assessing students’ work. This percentage should be about 80 percent. Student management, discipline and team “housekeeping” issues should not take more than 20 percent of the meeting time;

8. Ending by processing the effectiveness of the team meeting and setting an improvement goal for the next time.

_It is wise to look for ways to get time by holding to these three basic criteria as much as possible: (1) keep it to minimal or no extra cost; (2) keep the kids in school; (3) don’t interfere with any more instructional time than absolutely necessary._