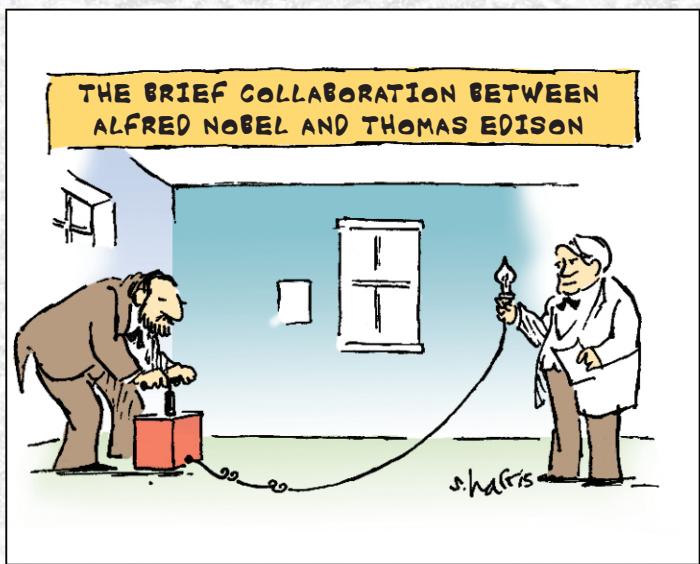


Fostering Achievement and
Community Together

F.A.C.T. Folio

Administrator Tools for Inclusive Schools
Volume Two, Spring 2006

Inclusive Schools: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Collaboration



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Collaboration doesn't have to be this electrifying, but the term is used so often in education that we may forget how complex true collaboration can be.

Collaboration between general education and special education teachers is essential for successfully including students with disabilities in general education classrooms. But it is the school administrator who makes it happen! Effective leadership is vital to creating and maintaining a culture of collaboration.

A culture of collaboration is an environment where relationships will take root, grow, and flourish.

What school leaders say about collaboration:

"Last year our school had the lowest discipline rates and highest FCAT scores of all the middle school in our district. I think it's partly due to teachers using differentiated instructional strategies, planning meaningful lessons together, and holding higher expectations for all our students."

Joe Clifford, Principal, West Hernando Middle School,
Hernando County, Florida

"With the co-teaching model, we saw learning gains across the board . . . the ESE teachers bring strategies to the classroom that can help any student."

Tanya English, Principal, Crawfordville Elementary School,
Wakulla County Florida

**Look inside
for ways to build a
culture of collaboration
on your campus!**

The changing roles of teachers – models of effective collaboration:

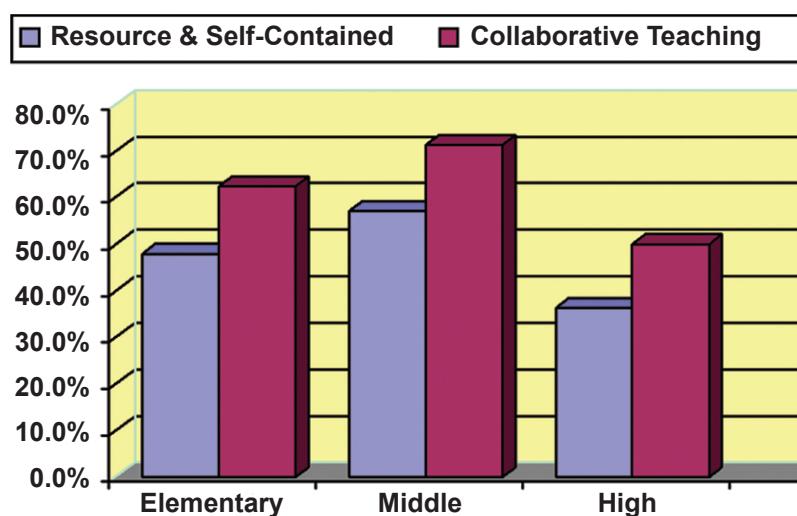
Support Facilitation: Ms. Quintana is an elementary school special education teacher. She comes in to Mrs. Abraham's regular third grade class during the guided reading portion of the reading block. During this time, Ms. Quintana reads with a small group of students **with and** without disabilities who are performing below grade level. When guided reading time is over, Ms. Quintana moves to the fourth grade math class to assist Mr. Ellis during a direct instruction lesson. She uses math manipulatives to model concepts for the whole class, including four students with various disabilities. Support facilitation is similar to co-teaching, but both the planning and teaching **time** may vary depending on student needs during specific instructional activities. Ms. Quintana may take on the role of co-teacher **and** support facilitator. For example, she may co-teach for an entire third grade reading block, then provide support facilitation services during **portions** of two fourth grade math classes, as well as a fifth grade writer's workshop. With support facilitation, both teachers plan for curricular and behavioral supports to **continue** after the special education teacher leaves the classroom.

Co-Teaching: Mrs. Jackson, a high school special education teacher, co-teaches with Mr. Edwards, a ninth grade general education math teacher, for the entire Algebra I class period. Over a third of the 24 students in their class have difficulty with the math curriculum: four have disabilities, five are performing well below grade level in math, and one is enrolled in an ESOL program. Mrs. Jackson makes sure the students with disabilities have the curricular and behavioral supports they need. But in a natural extension of this effort, other students needing additional support benefit from the special teaching strategies she employs. The two teachers meet **regularly** to plan lessons and blend their expertise to provide effective instruction for all the students. Although Mr. Edwards remains the content area specialist, he is picking up new strategies to help students in his other classes. Both teachers are pleased that collaborative planning and teaching is making a difference for the entire class.

Collaborative Teaching Works!

This graph shows the use of ESE service delivery models and the percentage of schools making AYP during Hillsborough County's 2004-2005 school year.

Source: Hillsborough County Public Schools

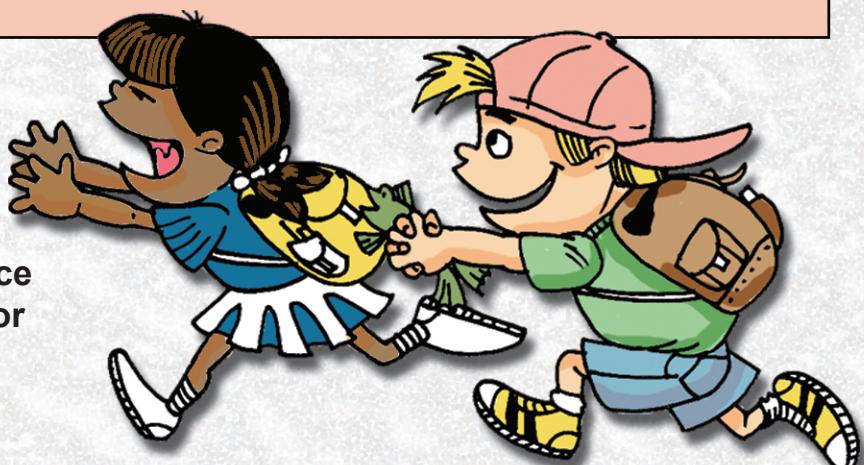


How you can support effective collaborative teaching:

- ❖ Develop a team to learn about and implement inclusive models:
 - Choose your team members carefully:
 - Start with teachers who have high status with their peers.
 - Recruit teachers **before** the school year begins!
 - Have special and general education teachers **volunteer** to work together.
 - Enlist a facilitator to guide team(s) through data analysis, planning, and problem-solving.
- ❖ Provide incentives for staff to collaborate:
 - Involve teachers in analyzing and interpreting student data.
 - Offer flexible or paid time for shared planning **throughout** the year.
 - Consider a floating sub to provide class coverage on a regular basis.
 - Acknowledge efforts and results.
- ❖ Model flexibility, risk-taking, and team problem-solving:
 - Send weekly e-mails to monitor and encourage progress.
 - Participate in planning, scheduling, and problem-solving sessions.
 - Expect and respond to staff frustration or disappointment.
 - Prepare to listen and take action!
- ❖ Provide necessary resources:
 - Locate appropriate curricular materials.
 - Offer a variety of collaborative, professional development opportunities (e.g., study groups, workshops, online learning).
 - Ask for advice from outside experts (FIN, university faculty, etc.).
- ❖ Communicate high expectations for **all** students and adults.
- ❖ Be open to new possibilities and ideas – **there is no one recipe, only vital ingredients!**
 - Attend to teams on a regular basis – keep the focus on **students**!
 - Conduct classroom walk-throughs – look for evidence of effective **collaboration**.

Don't do this alone!

Your FIN Facilitator can provide ongoing assistance and essential resources for you and your school!



How FIN can assist you:

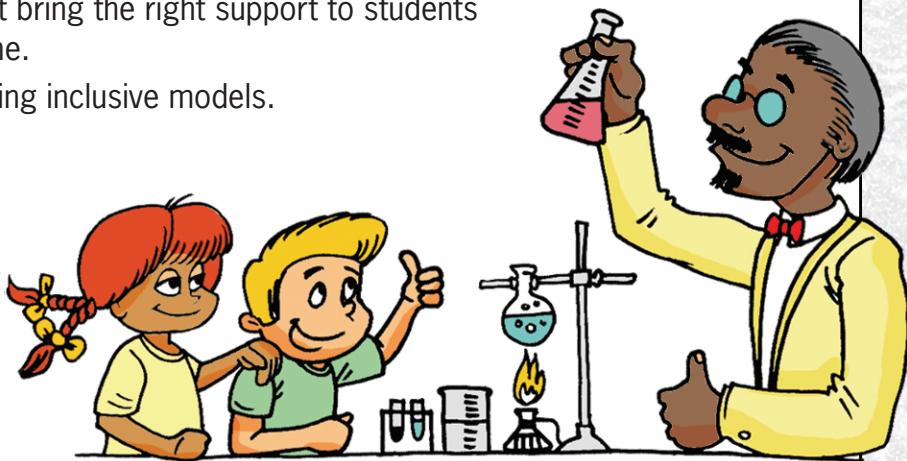
- 1** Contact your **FIN facilitator** to help you examine your student data, identify your unique needs, and develop inclusive teaching models.
- 2** Attend Collaborative Planning and Teaching (CPT) training with your identified team(s):

What is CPT? CPT is a practical, two-day workshop that provides school teams with the “basics” of inclusive education. Teams learn how to:

- ❖ identify the support needs of each student.
- ❖ define new teaching roles and responsibilities.
- ❖ build relationships based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding.
- ❖ find time for collaborative planning.
- ❖ assist staff who are resistant to change.
- ❖ identify and prioritize needs.

Your FIN facilitator can provide support for your team(s) to participate in professional development activities throughout the year.

- 3 Request ongoing follow-up and assistance from your FIN facilitator.** FIN can help your team(s):
 - ❖ make instructional decisions based on student data.
 - ❖ develop flexible schedules that bring the right support to students with disabilities at the right time.
 - ❖ network with other schools using inclusive models.
 - ❖ learn and apply differentiated strategies that support struggling learners.
 - ❖ make curriculum adaptationist work in every classroom.
 - ❖ refine instructional practices to improve outcomes for all students.



“Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.” Andrew Carnegie

How can you contact your local FIN facilitator? Visit our Web site to locate a FIN facilitator in your area!



www.FloridaInclusionNetwork.com

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