

Collaborative Teaching Sessions

A Guide for Group Facilitators

Developed and written by
The Florida Inclusion Network



The Florida Inclusion Network: Fostering Achievement and Community Together

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COLLABORATIVE TEACHING

Introduction



INTRODUCTION



This notebook contains materials for facilitators to use in conducting targeted technical assistance to teams of teachers working to include students with disabilities in the general education classroom.

Sue Anderson is a special education teacher at Centerville Middle School. Sue is committed to including students with disabilities in general education. District policies and state and federal requirements and her own school principal not only support but require this commitment.

To meet the IEP requirements of her students, she needs to schedule sixteen of them into general education math classes. Rather than putting them all in one class, she is collaborating with three math teachers to schedule and provide instruction to her students in three different classes. Collaborative planning and teaching will be the key to making this work. Sue and the three math teachers have been to *Collaborative Planning and Teaching (CPT)* training together and came away with a good foundation on how they need to work together. But back at their school, trying to make inclusion work in the everyday world of their classrooms is turning out to be harder than they expected.

As a facilitator, how can you support school teams like these? *Collaborative Teaching Sessions* provide a structure for school teams to meet, learn and problem solve together for successful inclusion. With your help as a facilitator, these sessions provide the bridge between the CPT training and the ongoing support that teaching teams need in the real world.

To use this guide, facilitators should:

1. Work with teachers and administrators to identify the needs of teams
2. Select topics from the sessions to meet the team needs
3. Select a schedule for offering the sessions
4. Read the session guide and make necessary preparations

What makes a team?



Collaborative teaching teams are made up of at least two teachers, one a special education teacher and the other a general education teacher. These teachers PLAN instruction for students with disabilities in the general education classroom, and then TEACH together for part of the school day or school week. While paraprofessionals, therapists and others may be involved, it is these teams of teachers that are the backbone of inclusion. The *Collaborative Teaching Sessions* can be used with any number of teams who are involved in the process of collaborative teaching.

What makes a facilitator?



Facilitators for these sessions can be state, regional or district-based technical assistance providers, as well as school-based personnel, such as administrators or lead teachers. Facilitators for the collaborative teaching sessions should have:

- A working knowledge of collaborative teaching as a way of including students with disabilities in general education classrooms.
- Facilitation skills
- Access to resources needed for the sessions
- A willingness to provide ongoing support to teacher teams

Topics for Collaborative Teaching Sessions

Teams and facilitators have identified the following topics as important to ongoing learning and problem-solving for teams. These topics are not presented in any particular order. Facilitators need to assess the needs of a team through informal surveys, written needs assessments, site visits, or consultations with teachers and administrators and choose topics to meet those needs.

A. *Reflect & Refine*

Teams share successes, identify challenges, and brainstorm ways to address those challenges

B. *Collaborative Teaching Roles & Responsibilities*

Collaborative planning, instruction, and assessment

C. *Flexible Scheduling*

An overview of the scheduling process

D. *Building Communities of Practice*

An introduction to study groups

E. *Curricular Planning*

Knowing and understanding your students

F. *Instructional Arrangements*

Flexible grouping strategies

G. *Classroom Strategies for Diverse Learners*

Introduction to differentiated instruction

H. *Communication Strategies for Teams*

Consensus building; dealing with conflict; dealing with resistance

I. *Working Styles*

Knowing and understanding your team partners; establishing rapport and trust; tapping into personal strengths

J. *Curricular Planning and Support for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities*

K. *Community Building in the Classroom*

Strategies to build community among students

L. *Effective use of Paraprofessionals*

Strategies and tools for communication and student support

M. *Team Building*

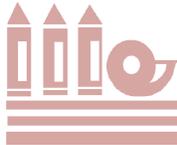
Strategies to build effective working relationships



- N. *Disability Awareness for Students:***
Using children's literature; classroom activities K-12
- O. *Family Involvement***
It's more than just the IEP meeting!
- P. *The Thirty-Minute Problem-Solving Process***
Team problem-solving
- Q. *Curriculum-Based Assessment Strategies***
- R. *Classroom Management Strategies***
- S. *Peer Coaching***
- T. *FCAT Participation for Students With Disabilities***

Structure and Schedule of Sessions

This notebook contains materials and specific instructions for structured 90-120 minute teaching sessions to be guided by a facilitator.



Materials for each session include:

- A description of the session
- Objectives for the session
- A list of materials needed
- Masters for handouts
- Instructions for preparing and setting up the session
- Instructions for conducting the small and large group activities
- Additional resources for the facilitators

Depending on the scheduling and learning needs of the teams, these sessions can be scheduled as:



- One 90-120 minute session for one or more teaching teams during regularly scheduled planning times.
- One 90-120 minute session for one or more teaching teams during after- school meeting time.
- A half-day or full day workshop for several teaching teams made up of two to four 90-120 minute sessions.