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Co-Teaching in Today's Schools

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Co-Teaching in Today's Schools

Introduction

Often times, co-teaching is viewed as any arrangement in which two teachers share the responsibility for teaching. However, co-teaching models vary greatly based on the needs of the students in the class. It is the responsibility of the teachers to determine which practice works best for the class as a whole. Co-teaching is used as a way to meet the needs of both general education and special education students in a combined classroom setting. The purpose of this research is to discover the opinion and perspective of current co-teachers in two different school settings.

Literature Review

Overview

Coteaching is just one option on the special education continuum of services meant to meet the needs of the student with special needs. It has become prevalent because of the government mandates that necessitate keeping special education students in the least restrictive environment to the greatest extent possible. Coteaching is defined as "two or more educators-one a general education teacher and the other a special education teacher or other specialist-share the instruction for a single group of students, typically in a single classroom setting" (Friend & Bursuck, 2009, n.p.). However, just establishing a coteaching model in a classroom does not ensure that the needs of the students are being met. Many factors go in to a successful cotaught arrangement and often time coteaching is not efficient.

Reasons for coteaching:

The biggest challenge teachers face in education is meeting the needs of a diverse group of learners. The special education continuum is a way to attempt to meet those needs by offering students opportunities not allowed to them through general education. This can include smaller class sizes, support of reading specialists, or a one-to-one aid. However, "general education systems and practices have long been criticized for inadequacies in educating diverse learners" (York-Barr, Ghere, & Sommerness 2007 p. 302).

This occurs because often times these services are provided to the student outside of the general education classroom, and apart from their peers in a separate room with a separate teacher. The special education teacher providing the support often does not collaborate with the general education teacher and these supports may not relate to what is being taught in the general education curriculum. This can create a feeling of isolation for the student receiving special education as the student is continually singled-out and taken out of the classroom and not able to be included in certain aspects of the general education curriculum.

It has been argued that the setting most desirable for students with special needs is the general education classroom. "Learning in general education contexts offers diverse student opportunities to access the core curriculum and also opportunities to learn sociocultural routines and expectations" (York-Barr, et al., 2007, p. 302). A small group setting may not carry the same demands or expectations that a general education classroom does. It is imperative that teachers provide students with differing abilities the

most beneficial placement. Students who come from disadvantaged homes, are culturally diverse or who receive special education services, are more likely to “be low academic achievers, to be retained, to drop out of school, and to have limited access to postsecondary education” (York-Barr, et al., 2007, p.2). Therefore, it is essential that schools provide these learners with the supports needed to achieve success. One solution to this problem is collaborative instructional teams.

There are many benefits for all students when teachers collaborate in teaching. For one, the more students see adults collaborate, the more likely they will pick up on their modeling and become better at working with others. They gain the benefit of two teachers combining their resources and professional expertise. “Also, students can develop critical-thinking skills by synthesizing multiple perspectives and relating information to a larger conceptual framework” (Dugan & Letterman, 2008, p. 12).

History of Coteaching:

Collaborative teaching or coteaching, can be defined in many ways. A generally accepted definition is “Co-teaching in special education is an instructional delivery approach in which a classroom teacher and a special education teacher share responsibility for planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction for a group of students, some of whom have exceptional needs” (Friend & Reisig, 1993, n.p.). Furthermore, coteaching occurs in a single classroom, rather than being pulled out for services. This creates a more cohesive classroom community in which all members of the class are viewed as contributors and therefore feel value.

However, in order to understand what coteaching is today, it is important to

understand what brought about this form of teaching and what gap has made this necessary. The basis of coteaching truly originated in the 1950's with the idea of "team teaching." This idea had teams of teachers coming together to take responsibility for a large group of students. This was intended to meet the needs of large numbers of students at a time when there was a shortage of teachers.

Teachers would also participate in a large-group format lesson, then break up into sessions with 12-15 students, and then monitor individual study (Friend & Reisig, 1993). This form of teaching evolved in the 1960's when more student-centered approaches were becoming popular. At this time, large lecture-based instruction was followed up with additional instruction in traditional class-sized groups. Teachers also met to collaborate and plan, but then taught lessons individually.

By the 1970's, team teaching became more widespread and a variety of formats were being called team teaching. Because of this and the fact that no broad research was done on the topic, it is impossible to analyze it's effectiveness on student's achievement. Despite this, the goals for all team teaching methods were the same: "(a) to provide students with a more individualized and diversified learning experience and (b) to enable teachers to complement each other's expertise while providing a mutual professional support system" (Friend & Reisig, 1993, n.p.).

Even before the passage of PL 94-142, special-educators were stressing the importance of collaboration between special educators and general educators if inclusion were to work (Friend & Reisig, 1993). Federal mandates have made it essential that students with disabilities remain in the general education setting to the greatest extent possible. "Each reauthorization of PL 94 142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act,

1975), most recently the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004, has increased legislators' commitment to educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE)" (Kloo & Zigmond, 2008, p.13). If coteaching can meet the needs of students with disabilities, then this is an appropriate placement for them without having to pull them out of this setting for additional services. "IDEA of 1997 introduced the notion that students with disabilities should participate fully in statewide accountability efforts and should be held to the same high achievement standards as are students without disabilities, and IDEA of 2004 reiterated that notion" (Kloo & Zigmond, 2008, p. 13). Because federal mandates have made the LRE such a dominant focus, the feasibility and effectiveness of coteaching has become of interest to many schools.

The Various Models of Coteaching:

As coteaching becomes more widespread, more and more studies on best practices and essential components are becoming available. When coteaching is effective, it has the potential to meet the needs of many students with special needs at one time without relying on outside services. However, "for students with categorically identified learning needs, pull-out services remain a dominant model of service provision despite concerns about cost, segregation, stigmatization, and effectiveness" (York-Barr, et al., 2007, p. 303). Coteaching is a challenge both for the teachers and the schools, but the advantages of a successful cotaught classroom outweighs the difficulties in establishing such practices. Such advantages include "using diverse areas of expertise to differentiate instruction, enabling smaller group instruction that is coherent, and providing a common instructional experience on which the coteaching partners can reflect and make subsequent

improvements (York-Barr, et al., 2007, p. 305). Coteaching can be of immense benefit to both teachers and students of all abilities in a general education classroom. When implemented carefully, and considerations are made for potential challenges, the transition to coteaching can be rewarding and eye-opening. But several considerations must be made. There are a variety of coteaching models in schools today, and all of them have their advantages and disadvantages.

According to Friend and Cook (1995), five models of team teaching are in practice today. These include: One teaching, one assisting, station teaching, parallel teaching, alternative teaching and team teaching. Each approach has its positive and negatives and it is up to the educators involved to determine which best meets the needs of their group of students and fits with their particular teaching styles.

In one teaching, one assisting, one teacher takes a clear lead role while the other either observes students, or assists individuals who need extra help. A limited amount of planning is needed as each teacher can rely on prior experience for his or her particular role. The general educator may take the lead role, as they have the content knowledge, but this can create problems. The assisting teacher may not feel as if they are being used to his/her potential and students may not view them as an equal to the general education teacher. Also, because teacher collaboration and planning is minimal, each teacher's perspective may not be known to the other and the potential for helping to meet individual needs may be hindered because of this.

"In station teaching, teachers divide instructional content into two, three, or more segments and present the content at separate locations within the classroom" (Friend & Cook, 1995). When only two stations are implemented, the teachers divide the materials

and teach their half to half of the students. Then, the students rotate to the next station and the teachers repeat their portion of the lesson. When more groups are involved, a third or fourth station can be created in which students work independently or with a peer tutor to reinforce the material. Station teaching can be used at any grade level but it has to be arranged in a manner that the order that the material is presented in does not matter.

Some planning is involved in this approach, as the teachers need to decide how to best divide up the material. However, during the actual lesson no collaboration between the teachers is necessary. "Each has separate responsibilities for delivering instruction" (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.). The positives of station teaching are that equal teacher status is not an issue because both teachers share equal time in instructing. "Students benefit from a lower teacher-pupil ratio, and students with disabilities can be integrated into all the groups instead of being singled out" (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.). Also, teachers who are new to coteaching may feel more comfortable in this model as their instruction is still separate. However, drawbacks exist including timing of lessons so that both portions fit within the designated class schedule and noise and activity level are increased.

Parallel teaching is when teachers simultaneously deliver instruction to half of the class, which is divided up into heterogeneous groups. Instruction for this type of teaching is also planned jointly but delivered separately (much like in station teaching). Parallel teaching "often is used when students need opportunities to respond aloud, to engage in hands-on activities, or to interact with one another" (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.). This can be a positive arrangement for teachers new to the coteaching practice and also to the students as it lowers the teacher-student ratio. Noise and activity level can again become problematic and planning by the teachers must be done very precisely. "This type of co-

teaching lends itself to drill-and-practice activities, projects requiring close teacher supervision, and discussion of activities” (Friend & Cook, 1995).

Alternative teaching is when one teacher teaches the majority of the class, and the other teacher pulls a small group to a table elsewhere in the classroom. This group may participate in pre-teaching of material to be taught the next day, a review of material that has already been covered, or an enrichment group. An alternative teaching method can be beneficial for students who need a smaller group setting for instruction and it allows for all students to receive attention from a teacher in a small group. In order for alternative teaching to be effective, groupings need to be varied in order to ensure that all students are periodically included in a group (Friend & Cook, 1995). Otherwise the teachers run the risk of stigmatizing the students who repeatedly need re-teaching.

Team teaching involves both teachers sharing the instruction with all students. Several purposes and ways of implementing this type of teaching are prevalent. “The teachers might take turns leading a discussion, or one may speak while the other demonstrates a concept, or one might speak while the other models note taking on a projection system. The teachers who are teaming also role play and model appropriate ways to ask questions” (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.). This approach requires a high level of planning and commitment. Teachers need to feel comfortable with their coteacher and be able to share the teaching without feeling as if their role is being overtaken. This is the most collaborative form of coteaching and both teachers need to be ready for the effort needed. However, when done correctly, many teachers with this model report “a renewed energy in their teaching and prompts them to try new ideas for reaching their students” (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.).

Recently, Friend and Bursuck (2009) conclude that a sixth model of coteaching exists called one teach, one observe. In this approach, one teacher leads the instruction and the other teacher catalogs data on a few students based on their observations. This can aide both teachers in making instructional decisions to better meet these student's needs. For instance, the observing teacher may take notes during small group activities and look for the number of times students who struggle with social skills contribute to the small group discussion. "Teachers can observe students' ability to pay attention, work independently, make productive use of spare time, and seek assistance when they have questions" (p. 92). One drawback is that unless the teachers take turns in the leading role, student will begin to view the observer as a secondary teacher and may not view them as a main authority in the classroom. Also, both teachers will benefit from watching how the class runs and will be able to more specifically meet individual student's needs. This will also help in planning if both teachers have observed similar behaviors.

Benefits of Coteaching:

The benefits of coteaching rely heavily on the method of coteaching that is selected, as well as on a case-by-case situation. However, student outcomes have been documented. In a study done in California in 16 elementary, middle and high schools in cotaught or collaborative classrooms, "results included decreased referrals to intensive special education services, increased overall student achievement, fewer disruptive problems, less paperwork, increased number of students qualifying for gifted and talented education services, and decreased referrals for behavioral problems" (Thousand, Villa & Nevin, p. 240). Students clearly make academic gains in cotaught classrooms, but another important

improvement is to social skills. Often time the students with special needs are placed in an environment that they may not previously have had access to in a special education only setting. “For special education students [in cotaught classrooms], being part of the large class meant making new friends” in addition to meeting their educational needs” (p. 240). Research also suggests that “the presence of multiple teachers in the classroom fosters the development of student communication skills and improved student-teacher relationships” (Dugan & Letterman, 2008, p.12) which could be essential to the success of at-risk youth.

Students have several benefits from the collaboration of their teachers, however teachers who become a part of such a team often report their own benefits from the arrangement. Teachers who have moved to coteaching have reported less of a sense of isolation, a renewed excitement for teaching, and the ability to push themselves out of their comfort zone. Coteaching can be a catalyst to allow teachers to “experiment with a wide variety of teaching techniques” (Friend & Reisig, 1993, n.p.).

Considerations for Coteaching:

Unfortunately, coteaching is often seen as a financial burden on schools. With schools becoming more and more pressed for highly qualified teachers and classrooms, it is easy to see why coteaching is not a first choice when it comes to financial issues. Friend and Reisig (1993) suggest that there are three considerations that schools must make when it comes to coteaching’s price. “First, it is expensive for two qualified professionals to share a group of students not much larger than the group the classroom teacher taught alone. Second, in order for co-teaching to be used effectively, teachers must have opportunities to plan together and to evaluate their shared instruction. This, of course, requires even more

time. Third, co-teaching requires an increase in the resource of space allocation” (n.p.).

However, if coteaching meets the needs of students with disabilities, it must be considered as a placement option.

Another consideration is choosing which method of coteaching to implement. Selecting the most appropriate model for coteaching can clearly be daunting. Many factors need to be taken into consideration and agreed upon by both teachers. “Clearly, approaches to co-teaching should be selected on the basis of student characteristics and needs, teacher preferences, curricular demands, and pragmatics such as the amount of teaching space available” (Friend & Cook, 1995, n.p.). Also, teachers need to decide how many methods to implement. Many veteran coteachers use a variety of these methods, sometimes all within one lesson. Another consideration is how each model impacts the students with special needs. For example, because students in a coteaching classroom are heterogeneously grouped, “thus, in a station teaching arrangement, students with special needs are likely to be in each of the three station groups, and when alternative teaching occurs, the smaller group may or may not contain students with disabilities” (Friend & Bursuck, 2009, p. 94). Therefore, it is essential to consider how to meet the needs of these students when they are not in the small group with a teacher there at all times. Also, the best method depends on the teacher’s level of comfort and experience with coteaching. “Novice co-teachers may prefer station teaching or parallel teaching over teaming, especially in a class that includes several students with attention problems who would benefit from a smaller group structure” (p. 94). This is because it requires less time dual-instructing and therefore less planning.

Both teachers play a crucial role in the success of their teaching team. Therefore,

part of their success relies on their planning. Effective planning takes time that many teachers feel they do not have. It also requires both teachers to have the same goal.

“Without clear and specific goals, teams often flounder” (Friend & Bursuck, 2009, p. 95).

Teachers also need to be ready to question their instructional practices and see if they are ready for a collaborative relationship. Friend & Cook (1995) suggest that a series of questions be asked before entering into this professional arrangement. These questions include:

1. To what extent am I willing to let someone else carry out teaching tasks at which I am particularly skilled?
2. How willing am I to allow a colleague to see aspects of my teaching in which I am not particularly skilled?
3. To what degree do I believe that there is more than one right way to carry out almost any teaching/learning task?
4. How willing am I to tell a colleague when I disagree about an issue or have a concern? (n.p.)

An individual’s personality are also up for debate when it comes to being an effective co-teacher. Friend and Cook (1995) also suggest a list of characteristics that work well in a co-teaching environment. They include: Flexibility, commitment to the concept of co-teaching, strong interpersonal and communication skills, including collaborative problem-solving and decision-making skills, and “a well developed judgment so they can evaluate the information they gain from colleagues and use it in their teaching and decision making.” (n.p.)

Barr, Ghere & Sommerness (2007) also suggest that five key factors could be

attributed to success. They argue that a pre-existing dissonance with the prior state of support for students with special needs helped to make collaboration successful. Also, administrative mandates were needed to jump-start this collaboration combined with early support and resources to allow for more collaborative planning time. In this case-study, teachers most cited reason for success was that small group instruction “made possible by coteaching, was the primary advantage of the collaborative instructional models” (p. 319-320). Collaborative planning and multiple and varied instructional models were also reasons that coteaching was successful in this school.

Improvements That Should be Made:

One improvement that needs to be made is the amount of research done in the field of coteaching. After a long-term investigation of co-teaching, Mastropieri, Scruggs, and Graetz (2005) discovered that “Our investigations reveal that specific variables interact strongly with co-teaching success, and that these variables—academic content knowledge, high-stakes testing, and co-teacher compatibility—interact strongly with co-teaching success. Additional research could refine these and other variables to provide further implications for use of particular features of co-teaching (p. 269).

Many schools that already offer co-teaching as a service to special needs students also need some improvement. For instance, many times two teachers are assigned to a classroom as a coteacher. This arrangement may or may not be collaborative. Dr. Lynne Cook advocates “that teachers get training, assistance, and support so that they can learn the structures and skills to coteach collaboratively” (Spencer, 2005, p. 297). She describes the number one barrier to effective collaboration as not preparing professionals for the

adult/adult interactions they are going to need to participate in on a daily basis.

Another way schools can ensure the success of coteaching classrooms is to offer both teachers professional development. "Ongoing staff development that directly meets the needs of current and potential coteaching teams is critical. Opportunities to interact with other professionals who are coteaching is valuable" (Luckner, 1999).

Administrators also have to be willing to allow coteachers the flexibility in their schedules to allow for collaborative planning. Schools that are unwilling to make these changes will not see the full benefits that coteaching has to offer. One study suggested that administrators "create flexible scheduling to encourage collaborative teachers to use their time to meet and plan as well as debrief and problem solve" (Thousand, Villa & Nevin, n.d., p.246). The support that school administrators give to a coteaching team can alter the effectiveness of that team and it is essential that the support is there in order for coteaching to succeed.

Coteaching is something that requires commitment, flexibility, exceptional communication skills and above all, a desire to help all children succeed. Teachers must decide which form of coteaching will best meld with their situation, the needs of their students, and their level of comfort. Only teachers who are truly devoted to the cause and have the support from their school and administrators will be successful.

Methodology

Participants

Seven elementary teachers participated. Participants were selected because all were currently teaching in a co-teaching setting in one of two schools. Teachers were only

selected based on their professional title and not by any other demographic. Other demographics are unknown based on the survey results.

Setting

Three of the teachers taught at a suburban school district. The elementary school consists of about 100 students per grade level. The remaining four teachers taught at a lower income urban school district elementary school.

Procedure

Respondents participated anonymously through a survey. Surveys were distributed to two different schools and the seven teachers were those who chose to respond. The survey consisted of seven open-ended questions and participants responded in writing. All participants were informed that their responses would remain completely anonymous. Surveys were distributed through school mailboxes and were returned in the same manner. They were returned at the convenience of the respondent and surveys were collected over three weeks. Of the 18 surveys distributed, the seven that were returned were used for this research.

Findings

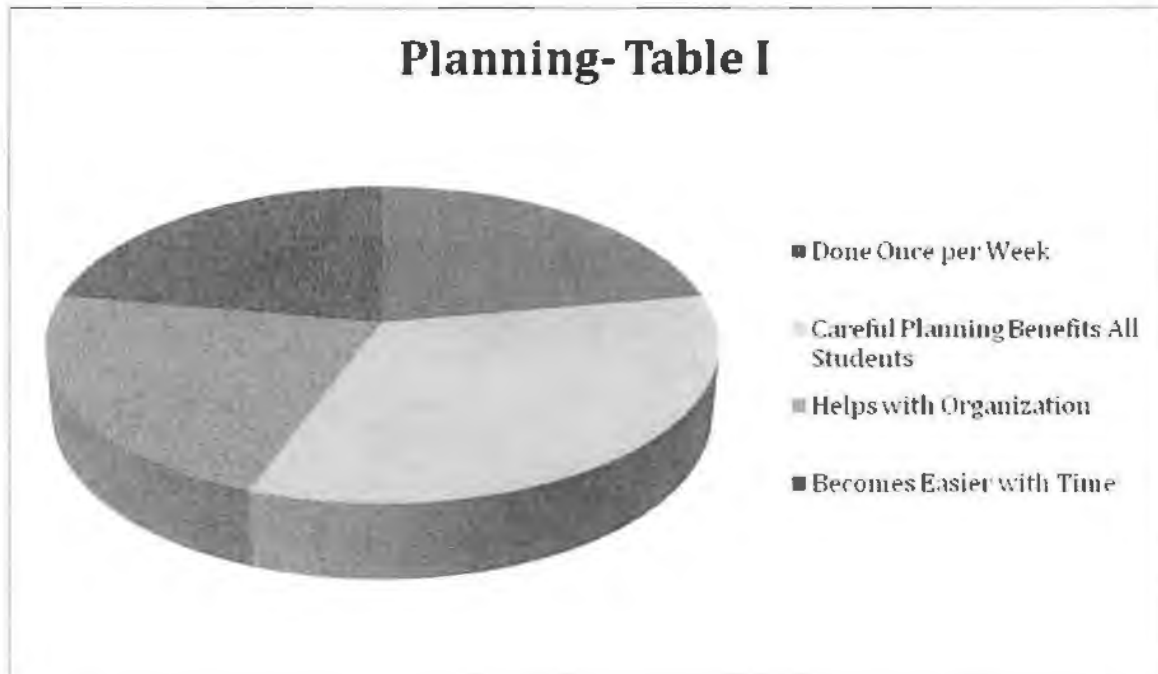
Thirty eight percent of the surveys were returned and all of their answers were used. Of the seven respondents, only one classroom reported having less than 40 students in their class. All other coteachers reported having 41 or more students. The number of adults in the classroom also varied. Five of the seven teachers cotaught with one other

teacher, whereas one reported having three teachers as well as one paraprofessional with their 43 students. Two respondents reported both teachers having a dual certification and one specified that one teacher was specifically general education and the other is special education.

Question two asked participants how well they felt coteaching meets the needs of all students. One hundred percent of the respondents said that coteaching better meets the needs of their students and participant number one specifically said “especially our special ed. students.” The most common reason stated for feeling this way was because of its allowance for small groups that could be tailored to the student’s needs. Seventy one percent stated this as being the main reason it is effective. Other responses include a varied teaching style, the ability to preteach and reteach struggling students, and more flexibility to give 1-on-1 attention and differentiate instruction.

When asked about the relationship between the coteachers, all seven surveys marked it as positive. Some (42%) mentioned that they have a similar teaching styles as their coteacher and two mentioned that they have different styles which allows them to be flexible with the way they teach.

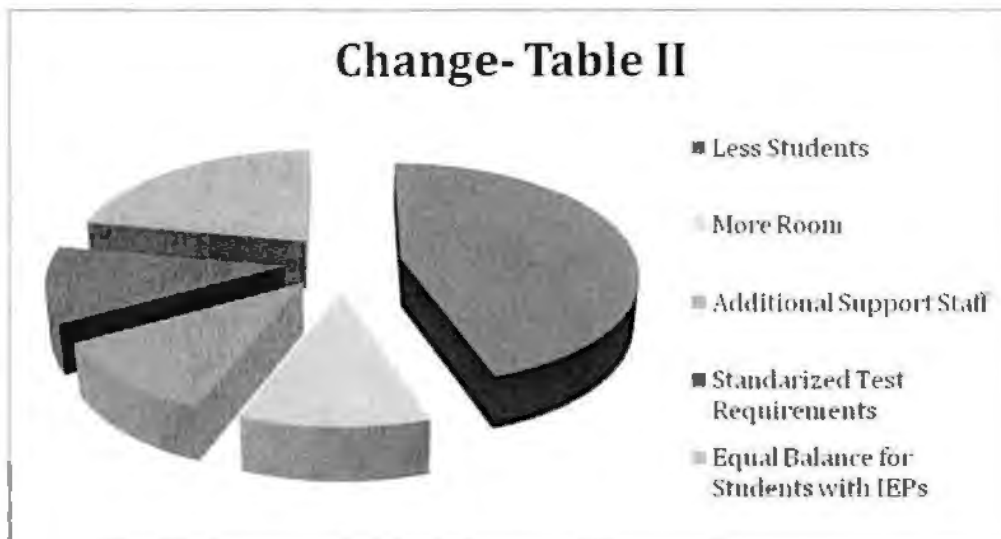
Planning was an area that 100% of participants viewed as being essential to the success of their cotaught classrooms. When asked about the significance of planning, four answers were apparent. The responses are shown in table I.



Another question posed was the importance of sharing a similar philosophy of education. One hundred percent of participants stated that this is of great importance. Participant number seven stated that it is crucial to have an understanding of what the other teacher does. Often times, this participant felt, general education and special education teachers do not share and understanding of the other's field, and this can lead to tension between the two. Participants one and four also stated that it is not only important to share a philosophy, but also beliefs in management and behavior. Twenty eight percent also stated that sharing a philosophy is also important for the students because it helps with consistency in the classroom. Two teachers, who reported coteaching together for 12 years, shared that "planning is one area of coteaching that becomes easier with time and practice" (participants six and seven).

Question six addressed what one aspect participants would change about their coteaching classrooms. The responses are recorded in Table II below. For this question,

many participants did not pick one aspect they would change and instead selected more than one thing they preferred would change.



The final question in the survey asked if the participants felt that they received all of the necessary support in order to make their classroom a success. Seventy one percent of participants reported that they received full support. Two participants stated the reason that their classrooms were not as successful as possible. Both reasons revolved around more adult help in the classroom. These two participants stated that with such large class sizes (over 40 students), another paraprofessional in the room would be helpful.

Discussion

According to Friend and Bursuck (2009), coteaching is defined as “two or more educators—one a general education teacher and the other a special education teacher or other specialist—share the instruction for a single group of students, typically in a single classroom setting” (n.p.). Coteaching is most effective when more than one teacher split

the responsibilities in a typically-sized classroom. However, according to the data collected from this survey, only one participant stated that two teachers teach in a classroom with 22 students. This means that 85.7% of the respondents coteach in a classroom where there are 40 or more students.

This fact reflects upon question number seven which asked the aspect of their classroom that they would change. Fifty one percent of teachers would want a smaller number of students in their coteaching class. Many teachers expressed that the reason they felt their classroom was successful in meeting the needs of their students was because they had the ability to supplement whole-group lessons with small group instruction. However, teacher number one even lamented that when dividing into small groups, “ten isn’t that ‘small.’” Most teachers (71%) felt that they were getting all the support necessary to be successful, however two teachers cannot meet 1-on-1 with each student in a class of 44 students. It seems that the coteaching classrooms in these two schools are a desirable destination for many students and, as a result, class size has expanded disproportionately to the number of coteachers available.

Coteaching has the ability to meet the needs of all students, including those with disabilities. In fact, traditional classrooms often lack this ability. “General education systems and practices have long been criticized for inadequacies in educating diverse learners” (York-Barr, et al., 2007 p. 302). Coteaching classrooms have more ability to be flexible and differentiate instruction. This is reflected in question two which asked how well the teachers felt their student’s needs were met. One hundred percent felt that it meets the needs of all students. However, this is in contrast to the fact that many of these same teachers wanted a smaller class size or another adult in the room. In a coteaching

classroom that truly fits the definition, two teachers would be able to meet the needs of a group of students equal to the number in a traditional classroom with one teacher. The many varieties of coteaching models could be implemented in this type of classroom more so than in the ones that were represented in this survey.

Teachers felt that one reason cotaught classrooms were so successful is because of the student's ability to see a variety of teaching styles. The literature review shows that this is in fact beneficial to students. "Students can develop critical-thinking skills by synthesizing multiple perspectives and relating information to a larger conceptual framework" (Dugan & Letterman, 2008, p. 12). The teachers in this survey felt that they had a positive relationship with their coteacher. It is likely that if teachers had a negative relationship, this would be projected in their teaching and may create an environment in which students fail to work well together. Modeling cooperation is essential when it comes to a coteaching classroom. One hundred percent of teachers who felt their classrooms were successful also felt that they had a positive relationship with their coteacher. This in turn, only benefits their student.

Planning is an area which teachers in a coteaching situation feel is crucial. Thirty three percent of respondents said that careful planning actually benefits the students most. Two respondents said they plan together on a weekly basis. It helps the teachers to feel as though they are more prepared and therefore have the ability to be flexible during the actual lessons. Two teachers also said that planning is much more intensive starting off, but once you learn each other's teaching style, planning takes less time and becomes more efficient. When done effectively planning can be the key to a successful coteaching arrangement. Coteaching is a way to meet the needs of all students and teachers who can

read each other quickly can then focus their attention on their students to see who needs more individualized instruction. The advantages of coteaching are vast and when a pairing works well, planning provides “diverse areas of expertise to differentiate instruction, enabling smaller group instruction that is coherent, and providing a common instructional experience on which the coteaching partners can reflect and make subsequent improvements (York-Barr, et al., 2007, p. 305).

Coteaching classrooms can look diverse from the outside, and it appears that coteachers themselves seem to view coteaching differently. Although all participants viewed their classroom as successful, they had different justifications as to why. Participant four stated that not only is a similar philosophy important, but also stated that similar teaching styles are also essential. However, participant two viewed their classroom as successful because “students are able to see different teaching styles.” Whatever the reason, it seems that what a coteaching classroom needs to be successful is for all teachers to have common goals and a similar ideas about how they want the classroom to run. “Without clear and specific goals, teams often flounder” (Friend & Bursuck, 2009, p. 95).

Despite the information obtained in this survey, more research and questions need to be asked in order to see how coteaching is being implemented in today’s schools. For instance, this survey only included a small sample of participants from two schools and does not reflect the opinions of schools in a variety of settings. Also, some questions that should have been asked include which model of coteaching the participant uses. It would be beneficial to know if they stick to one model or oscillate between several. Then, that information should be compared to how successful they feel their classroom is.

Participants should be asked to rate this on a scale, rather than in a short answer format so

that the responses can be quantified and analyzed. More information is needed in order to see how successful coteaching is in today's schools.

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Appendix A

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Co-Teaching in Today's Schools

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please fill this out to the best of your ability. These questions are open ended in order to allow for personal opinion to be expressed. If the questions are unclear or you would like more clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me. This survey will remain completely confidential.

1. Please describe the co-teaching setup in your classroom (number of students, roles of each teacher, etc.)

2. How well do you feel co-teaching meets the needs of all students in your classroom? Why do you feel this way?

3. How would you describe the relationship between you and your co-teacher?

4. Briefly describe the significance of planning in your co-teaching classroom.

5. How important do you feel similarities in philosophy of education is between co-teachers?

6. If you could change one thing about your co-teaching classroom, what would it be?

7. Do you feel you receive all the necessary support to make your co-teaching classroom successful? If not, what is lacking?

Thank you again for your time.

Please return this survey in my mailbox at Victor Primary school.