

# Co-Teaching in Student Teaching

## St. Cloud State University, MN



### What is Co-Teaching?

Co-Teaching is defined as two teachers (*cooperating teacher and teacher candidate*) working together with groups of students, sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction, as well as the physical space.

**Co-Teaching is an Attitude...**  
An attitude of sharing the classroom and students

Co-Teachers must always be thinking

We're Both Teaching!

### Data show Co-Teaching is a way...

- ✓ to build stronger connections between universities and school partners;
- ✓ to provide both support and professional development for cooperating teachers;
- ✓ to increase opportunities for placements;
- ✓ to better meet P-12 student needs;
- ✓ for teacher candidates and cooperating teachers to build strong relationships;
- ✓ for teacher candidates to have more opportunities to teach;
- ✓ for teacher candidates and cooperating teachers to enhance their communication skills;
- ✓ to induct and mentor teacher candidates.



### Why Co-Teach?

- ✓ Increases instructional options for all students
- ✓ Addresses diversity and size of today's classrooms
- ✓ Increases instructional options for all students
- ✓ Enhances classroom management
- ✓ Provides mentoring and guidance throughout the experience
- ✓ Creates an opportunity to plan, teach and evaluate as a team
- ✓ Helps develop knowledge, skills and dispositions for teaching
- ✓ Improves the academic performance of students in the classroom

### Co-Teaching Strategies

- One Teach, One Observe** — One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher. The key to this strategy is to have a focus for the observation.
- One Teach, One Assist** — One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other teacher assists students with their work, monitors behaviors, or corrects assignments.
- Station Teaching** — The co-teaching pair divide the instructional content into parts and the students into groups. Groups spend a designated amount of time at each station. Often an independent station will be used.
- Parallel Teaching** — Each teacher instructs half of the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material and present the lesson using the same teaching strategy. The greatest benefit is the reduction of student to teacher ratio.
- Supplemental Teaching** — This strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected grade level, while the co-teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials extended or remediated.
- Alternative/Differentiated Teaching** — Alternative teaching strategies provide two different approaches to teaching the same information. The learning outcome is the same for all students, however the instructional methodology is different.
- Team Teaching** — Well planned, team taught lessons, exhibit an invisible flow of instruction with no prescribed division of authority. Using a team teaching strategy, both teachers are actively involved in the lesson. From a student's perspective, there is no clearly defined leader, as both teachers share the instruction, are free to interject information, and available to assist students and answer questions.
- Adapted from Cook & Friend (1995)

### Co-Teaching is NOT:

- ✓ A less rigorous student teaching experience or easier for teacher candidates;
- ✓ One person teaching one subject or period followed by another who teaches a different subject or period;
- ✓ One person teaching while another person prepares instructional materials or sits and watches;
- ✓ When one person's ideas prevail regarding what will be taught and how it will be taught.

### Co-Teaching Won't Happen Without PLANNING. Pairs Are encouraged to:

- ✓ **Designate a co-planning time.** *This time is used to determine what co-teaching strategies will be used and how you will teach collaboratively. You will be responsible for additional planning beyond this planning time; the focus is on planning for co-teaching.*
- ✓ **Try each co-teaching strategy.**
- ✓ **Adjust the lead role.** *Lead of the planning shifts from the cooperating teacher (early in the experience) to the teacher candidate as the experience progresses.*

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## Research and Results

*A comparison of the MCA academic achievement scores in reading and math (grades 1-6) of students in co-taught classrooms (cooperating teacher and teacher candidate), students in a classroom with a single teacher, and classrooms where a non co-teaching model of student teaching was undertaken. Researchers reported that students in co-taught classrooms statistically outperformed students in either of the other settings.*

MCA Reading Proficiency	Co-Taught Candidate	One Teacher	Non Co-Teaching Candidate	p	MCA Math Proficiency	Co-Taught Candidate	One Teacher	Non Co-Teaching Candidate	p
2004-2005	82.1% N=318	75.7% N=934	65.3% N=101	.002	2004-2005	82.3% N=317	75.8% N=927	70.5% N=105	.016
2005-2006	78.7% N=484	73.5% N=1597	65.0% N=160	.002	2005-2006	68.9% N=524	64.7% N=1660	57.9% N=171	.025
2006-2007	<i>Insufficient data to analyze</i>				2006-2007	<i>Insufficient data to analyze</i>			
2007-2008	80.8% N=261	61.4% N=1977	62.1% N=269	<.001	2007-2008	74.5% N=314	59.5% N=1939	62.6% N=278	<.001

## Four Year Cumulative Data

MCA Reading Proficiency	Co-Taught Candidate	One Teacher	Non Co-Teaching Candidate	p	MCA Math Proficiency	Co-Taught	One Teacher	Non Co-Teaching Candidate	p
<b>OVERALL 4 Year Cumulative</b>	78.8% N=1461	67.2% N=6403	64.0% N=572	< .001	OVERALL 4 Year Cumulative	72.9% N=1519	63.7% N=6467	63.0% N=597	< .001
<b>Free/Reduced Lunch Eligible</b>	65.0% N=477	53.1% N=2684	49.5% N=222	< .001	Free/Reduced Lunch Eligible	54.2% N=513	47.3% N=277	45.7% N=23	.032
<b>Special Education Eligible</b>	74.4% N=433	52.9% N=1945	46.4% N=179	< .001	Special Education Eligible	72.0% N=472	54.7% N=190	48.9% N=18	< .001
<b>English Language Learners</b>	44.7% N=76	30.7% N=515	25.8% N=31	.069	English Language Learners	30.5% N=118	28.8% N=671	26.8% N=41	.656

## Reported Benefits

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Practicing Teachers who co-taught in student teaching report:</b></p> <p>They are comfortable and capable of collaborating effectively;            They are equipped to deal with classroom management issues;            They are eager to receive feedback and seek opportunities to reflect;            They are able to effectively differentiate instruction;            They feel knowledgeable in ways to maximize the human resources available, including paraprofessionals, and volunteers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Benefits to Cooperating Teachers:</b></p> <p>In an end of experience survey (N=279), cooperating teachers agreed they benefited from co-teaching in the following ways:</p> <p>Being able to reach high need students ..... 94.5%            Better relationship with teacher candidate ..... 92.3%            Professional growth through co-planning ..... 90.5%            Enhanced energy for teaching ..... 89.0%</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Benefits to Teacher Candidates:</b></p> <p>In an end of experience survey (N=249), teacher candidates agreed they had benefited from co-teaching in the following ways:</p> <p>Improved classroom management skills ..... 92.4%            Increased collaboration skills ..... 92.0%            Taught more ..... 90.0%            Deeper understanding of the curriculum ..... 89.2%            More opportunities for self reflection ..... 88.8%</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Benefits to K-12 Students:</b></p> <p>In focus groups (N=546), K-12 students reported that in co-taught classrooms:</p> <p>Students became more engaged by working in smaller groups;            They received more individual attention;            They got their questions answered faster;            They got papers, assignments, and grades back faster;            Students behaved better.</p>