

## DEVELOPING A CO-TEACHING PROGRAM

### **A. Study the current program and determine the needs of your students.**

To develop a program that best suits the students' needs, read and study co-teaching articles, books and videos. Examine your current special education program and ask:

1. Could more of our special education students in pull-out and self-contained classes be served in the general education classroom *if* they had the support of a co-teacher?
2. In what areas (subjects) do the special need's students need this additional support?

### **B. Provide training to educate faculty and administration about co-teaching.**

Training of faculty and administration increases awareness and support of co-teaching. The training should include principals and other administrators, the teaching faculty and guidance counselors. Administrators' participation in co-teaching training allows for the development of a common vocabulary base. Administrators will learn about the many aspects of inclusion and co-teaching, and will be able to anticipate the kinds of support that will be needed to implement such a program.

The administrators can provide teachers with the support they need as well as provide release time for planning and problem solving. For the co-teaching program to succeed, everyone must be flexible, willing to try something new, and be committed to the concept of inclusion and co-teaching. They will play a key role in developing the culture to collaborate and will facilitate in the problem solving process by acting as a neutral third party.

Co-teaching training for administration and faculty should include a brief overview of the impact of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB 2001) and the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) on special education. These laws mandate that students, including those with disabilities, have access to the general education curriculum, are taught by highly qualified teachers and receive research based instruction. Other topics to cover are:

- Co-teaching definition
- Benefits of co-teaching
- Co-teaching expertise
- Ways to co-teach
- Co-planning
- Lesson plans
- Scheduling

**Lack of administrative training and support is often a major factor in the inability to start and sustain a successful co-teaching program.** Support is vital from parents, students, teachers, administration, district staff, and the school board.

## Elementary Co-Teaching Lesson Plan

| Date and Standard   | Co-Teaching Model   | Lesson:<br><i>The Three Little Pigs</i>   | Materials  | Assessment                                    | Homework    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modifications</li> <li>• Accommodations</li> <li>• Enrichment</li> </ul>  |
|---|---|---|--|---|-------------|--|
| <p>Monday</p> <p>Phonemic Awareness, Word Recognition and Fluency</p> | <p><b>P</b></p> <p><b>T</b></p> <p><b>R</b></p> <p><b>T</b></p> | <p>Divide the class into two groups.</p> <p>1. Each teacher reads <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> to her group and then leads a discussion on the book. Guide children in practicing voice inflections for the different pigs and the wolf. Each group dictates answers to questions and decides what lesson was learned in the story.</p> <p>2. Both groups come together and present their answers. Both teachers circulate.</p> <p>3. Divide into three rotation groups.<br/>           Group 1: Teacher A works with students to glue shapes and raffia on paper to make a straw house.<br/>           Group 2: Teacher B works with students to glue shapes to make a stick house.<br/>           Group 3: Independent: Students play together with large cardboard "bricks" to make a brick house.</p> <p>Teacher A leads class in song as Teacher B demonstrates motions.</p> | <p><i>The Three Little Pigs</i></p> <p>Questions</p> <p>Shapes, cardboard bricks, glue, papers raffia, straws</p> <p>Action song words</p> | <p>Observation and responses to questions</p> | <p>None</p> | <p>Read <i>The Three Little Pigs</i> to Janey in advance of the lesson. Help her to formulate an answer to what lesson was learned.</p> <p>Remind John to take his behavior contract out.</p> <p>Have Mrs. Smith preteach the action song to Janey, Susan and Hunter</p> |

## OBSERVING A CO-TAUGHT CLASS

Observing a co-taught class is different than observing a class taught by one teacher; both teachers share in the delivery of instruction. The observer should use a form that shows evidence that both teachers have been involved in planning, instructing and assessing all students in the co-taught class. Below is a sample of a formal Co-Teaching Observation. For a clean copy of the **Co-Teaching Observation Form**, see pages 77-80.

### CO-TEACHING OBSERVATION FORM/FORMAL

Co-Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Observer \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Observation \_\_\_\_\_ Date and Time of Follow-up Conference \_\_\_\_\_

*It is recommended that both co-teachers receive a copy of this form in a pre-observation conference. At that time, the observer should inform the teachers on how this form will be used. Note: Every element listed may not be observed during one lesson. A co-teaching relationship develops gradually and is based on mutual trust and respect. Co-teachers continually develop their skills as they work with each other.*

0 - not observed

1 - somewhat evident

2 - clearly evident

#### I. PLANNING/PREPARATION

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| A. Co-teachers show evidence of parity. (a desk or place for each teacher to keep materials, both names on materials sent home, on class rosters, syllabi, newsletters, on the door, etc.) | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| B. Co-teachers can provide a copy of IEP accommodations/modifications for students in their class.   | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| C. A copy of the co-taught lesson plan is provided.  | 0 | 1 | 2 |