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# Understanding Teacher's Experiences in Co-Taught Classrooms

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Understanding Teacher's Experiences in Co-Taught Classrooms

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education  
Seton Hall University

2011

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

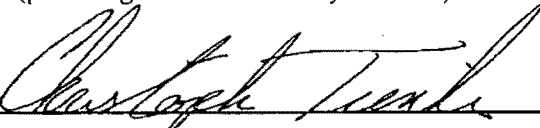
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## Abstract

### Understanding Teacher's Experiences in Co-Taught Classrooms

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This included examining their perspectives about the co-teaching model and the relationships that are formed between co-teachers. The study was a descriptive study that used qualitative research methods to understand the perspectives of teachers involved in co-taught classes. The data collection method was semi-structured interviews. Participants consisted of administrators and teachers in order to develop a cross section of perspectives. The site for this study was John H. Brown School. John H. Brown School is a middle school located in a culturally diverse urban neighborhood. Co-teaching occurs on all levels at John H. Brown School.

After the research was coded and analyzed it was determined that the administration and teachers had diverging expectations of how a co-taught classroom should be structured. Teachers suggested that the administration should take a more active role in co-taught classrooms, where as the administration suggested that the co-teaching partners should work their issues out on their own.

Five main themes resulted from this study. Administrative support, role ambiguity, role conflict, structure of co-teaching, and the golem effect offered insight into how co-teaching functions at John H. Brown School.

The teachers at the John H. Brown School lack support from their administration, making it difficult for them to succeed in co-taught classrooms.

## Acknowledgements

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I would like to acknowledge Dr. Rebecca D. Cox who inspired me to conduct a qualitative study. My committee members Dr. Eunyuong Kim and Dr. Amoit Michel have provided a wealth of feedback that has encouraged me to further my skills as a qualitative researcher. I would also like to acknowledge AnnMarie Rinaldi and my K-12 colleagues who have supported me throughout the entire process.

## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful wife Ashley. Thank you for giving me the strength, determination and passion to pursue my dreams. You have always believed in me. I would be lost without you.



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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

The birth of the current inclusionary movement is rooted in Wolfenberger's (1972) normalization principle. According to Salend (2007), Friend and Bursuck (2008), and Scruggs, Mastropieri and McDuffie (2007), the inclusionary movement is a set of beliefs shared by every member of a school or school district that emphasizes the notion that all students can learn, regardless of their disability. Wolfenberger's (1972) normalization principle suggests that placing special needs students in settings with typical chronological peers will result in normative changes in behavior and self esteem. This, in turn, will lead to better academic performance on the part of special needs students and the acceptance of special needs persons in society as a whole. Essentially, the inclusionary movement is a national effort of creating schools and other social institutions that meet the needs of a diverse population of learners, in addition to respecting and learning from other's differences (Friend & Bursuck, 2008; Kloo & Zigmund, 2008; Salend, 2007; Scruggs, Mastropieri & McDuffie, 2007; Yell, 2005).

According to Kloo and Zigmund (2008), the reauthorization of special education laws like PL 94-142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975) has prompted legislators to increase their commitment to educating students with disabilities in general education classrooms (Yell, 2005). Throughout the literature, the "general education classroom" has been synonymous with the "LRE" or least restrictive environment. This is

because the general education classroom does not have the stigma that exists in the resource room; therefore, students are free to learn without shame or persecution (Friend & Bursuck, 2008; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008; Scruggs et al. 2007).

Kloo and Zigmond (2008) wrote that “advocates have promoted co-teaching as a service-delivery model that will ensure that students with IEPs (Individual Education Program) receive whatever support is necessary for them to function successfully in general education classrooms” (p.13). They suggested, that by placing a special service provider in the room, teachers could incorporate a broader range of instructional practices in order to meet the needs of all students in general education classrooms, this in turn will ensure that students who are not classified, but are at risk, also receive the necessary support needed to succeed. Essentially, co-teaching will reduce the stigma that is associated with needing “extra help” (Austin, 2001; Kloo & Zigmond, 2008 Scruggs et al., 2007).

In response to a number of trends and legislative demands placed on schools to increase inclusive instruction, many school districts have turned to co-teaching as a means of encouraging effective instruction in inclusive classrooms (Scruggs et al., 2007). Implemented to provide support to special needs students who are included in larger classrooms, co-teaching usually consists of a general education teacher paired with a special education teacher in the same setting. Both teachers coordinate instruction to meet the needs of a heterogeneous class of students (Austin, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007). Co-teaching has also been called team teaching, co-enrollment, collaborative teaching, or cooperative teaching.

The current body of educational research suggests that the trend of inclusive instruction is here to stay (Valeo, 2008). Therefore, co-teaching will continue to be used as a means of complying with the inclusion movement.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The existing literature on co-teaching reveals very few qualitative explanatory studies on the perspectives of teachers involved in co-taught classes as they meet the educational needs of students with learning disabilities (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). The predominant theme in the literature on co-teaching is centered on compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the proven benefits of having two professionals in a room.

Educators placed in co-taught classrooms share responsibilities for all activities related to planning and delivery of instruction, in addition to evaluating, grading and disciplining students (Salend & Johansen, 1997). A number of investigators have compared this arrangement to a marriage because of the level of daily collaboration that is needed in order to make the process work. Kohler-Evans (2006) wrote that co-teaching is a forced marriage and individuals must discuss roles in order to foster cohesive instruction. As a result of this forced arrangement, educators must now confront social issues that classroom teachers have never faced before such as parity, turfism, and the division of labor. These social issues directly affect teachers' perspectives and behavior within the classroom (Cook & Friend, 1995). These behaviors will eventually influence student learning. Therefore, it is essential that a study be conducted that examines teacher's perspectives towards the co-teaching model.



Very few pieces of literature examine how teachers view themselves and their colleagues within co-taught classes. Problems exist within the research literature due to politics, an over reliance on expert opinion, and the ubiquitous screening of negative results. Co-teaching research has not been practitioner oriented and applications of research-based strategies are loosely coupled to lackluster theories (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). The relationships that exist between special educators and general educators are at the heart of the co-teaching model. Investigators must identify characteristics, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the co-teaching model if the field is expected to evolve. These variables directly influence the success of co-teaching relationships which in turn will affect the services teachers provide to students (Friend, 2000; Lamorey, 2002)

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This included examining their perspectives about the co-teaching model and the relationships that are formed between co-teachers. The literature on co-teaching and the analysis of the data suggests that role ambiguity, role conflict, administrative support, and the Golem effect are all key concepts in the world of co-teaching.

Co-teaching is a unique topic within the realm of k-12 education because not every school approaches it in the same way. Two schools in the same district could be a few blocks from each other and have very different methods of implementing co-teaching. Over the years, a number of my colleagues have expressed concerns about their co-teaching partners and the types of relationships that they form. These relationships can range from successful to nightmarish, with more teachers leaning toward nightmarish.

The question then becomes how do teachers define, understand, and explain their experiences in co-taught classrooms?

### **Significance of the Study**

According to the literature on co-teaching, there is some evidence that suggests co-teaching produces promising academic outcomes for students with disabilities (Walther-Thomas, 1997). However, according to Harbort, Gunter, Hull, Brown, Venn, P. Wiley and E. Wiley (2007), “much more information is needed to better understand the exact nature of the roles and behaviors of both the regular education teacher and the special education teacher in these classrooms” (p.14). In a similar vein, Bauwens and Hourcade (1991) suggested that when implementing the co-teaching model one must take into account philosophical, theoretical, and procedural considerations. The results of this study highlight and clarify these three concepts.

One of the major themes that resulted from this study was role conflict. Participants suggested that, due to a lack of structural continuity, co-teaching partners would often bicker about pedagogical and classroom management issues. Additionally, participants stated that the ambiguous nature of their roles contributed to the amount of conflict within the classroom.

These issues eventually affect the practice of parity in the classroom. According to Kohler-Evans (2006), “the general and special education teachers should treat each other as equal partners” (p.262). She understands this idea to be true because “both teachers are responsible for all the students in the classroom, therefore both teachers should be fully represented when it comes to all aspects of classroom identification”

(p.262). However, teachers in this study suggested that only the general education teachers were represented in the classroom.

Taking into account these contextual elements, there is a need for a descriptive qualitative study that uses teacher testimonies as the primary avenue for investigating co-teaching. There exists some anecdotal information on the topic of co-teaching, however there are few qualitative explanatory studies.

### **Research Questions**

This study investigated the perspectives of teachers who participate in co-taught classrooms as they worked to meet the needs of student's with and without disabilities in a regular education classroom in a middle school. The following questions were addressed:

1. What roles do co-teachers adopt in inclusive classrooms?
2. What are co-teachers perspectives on administrative support for co-teaching?
  - a. How do teachers' understandings of co-teaching differ from the administration?
  - b. How does administrative opinion matter with what goes on in the classroom?
3. What are co-teachers perspectives of each other's roles?
4. What features of the co-teaching model do teacher's find useful?

### **Overview of Methods**

This study was conducted at John H. Brown School. The John H. Brown School is a k-8 school located in a culturally diverse, urban neighborhood. Within this school is a

middle school that covers grades 6 through 8. Data was collected from the middle school in the form of semi-structured interviews. Interviews were conducted at 8:00 a.m in the teachers room and the library. Each interview lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. Interview questions were open ended in order to generate rich data. Interviews were conducted with teachers and administrators. Teachers were purposefully sampled based on their experiences in order to develop a cross section of multiple perspectives. After interviews were collected, they were transcribed and systematically coded using a qualitative software package called NVIVO9. As codes were analyzed they were separated in to themes, relationships and trends in order to construct descriptive narratives.

#### **Limitations of the Study**

One limitation of this study was that I was unable to recruit every pair of co-teaching teachers in the building, therefore making it more difficult for me to completely answer the third research question. In some transcripts, I was unable to compare what co-teaching partners said about each other because one of the partners did not want to participate.

#### **Delimitations of the Study**

This study was designed to explore teacher's views on the current practice of co-teaching as they work to meet the needs of all students. The delimitations of this study included the following: The study was limited to a New Jersey, state-run Abbott district. Several schools in this district have met Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements for *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) (Yell, 2005). The study was limited to middle school teachers (grades 6, 7, and 8) in an urban setting.

### Definition of Terms and Abbreviations

The following are definitions and abbreviations relevant to the study.

*Abbott District.* The New Jersey Supreme Court ruled that the education being provided to students in urban districts was inadequate and unconstitutional. This suit, “brought by the Education Law Center (ELC) on behalf of all low-income children in New Jersey, the first Abbott decision in 1980 required school financing equity” (Barr, Sadovnik, & Visconti, 2006, p.295). Furthermore, “based on subsequent Abbott decisions, the most important of which was Abbott V in 1998, the Supreme Court required equity financing for Abbott districts at the average of the highest income districts in the state” (Barr et al., 2006, p.295).

*IDEA.* Part of the base for special education, its predecessor was the 1975 Education of the Handicapped Act (PL 94-142), which later was reauthorized in 1990 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, P.L. 105-17, 1997) and its amendment (P.L.108-446, 2004). This act clarifies the procedures for ensuring free appropriate public education to students with disabilities (Welch, 1998).

*Co-teaching.* “Sometimes called team teaching, co-enrollment, collaborative teaching, or cooperative teaching, occurs when two or more professionals jointly plan, coordinate, and deliver instruction to a diverse group of students in a single physical space” (Luckner, 1999, p.25).

*Collaboration* “is the interaction between professionals who offer different areas of expertise yet share responsibilities and goals” (Murawski & Hughes, 2009, p.269). Furthermore “it involves the need for parity and for all parties to participate actively” (Murawski & Hughes, 2009, p.269).

*Inclusive education*, sometimes referred to as full inclusion, is the commitment to achieving quality education for all learners, not just those with disabilities. The integration and education of students with disabilities in mainstream classes (Pather, 2007).

*Individual Education Program (IEP)* is the foundation of special education. It directs and monitors all facets of a student's special education program. "The IEP document describes the educational needs of a student, the goals and objectives that direct his or her program, the educational programming and placement, and the evaluation and measurement criteria that were developed during the IEP creation process" (Drasgow, Yell, & Robinson, 2001, p.359). Undeniably, "the IEP is the document and process that formalizes the free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for a student with disabilities" (Drasgow et al., 2001, p.359).

*Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)* is the stipulation of special education and services at public expense in agreement with an IEP designed to help the child receive educational assistance (Yell, 2005).

*Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)* children with disabilities should be educated to the maximum extent with typical chronological peers under IDEA (Friend 2007; Yell, 2005).

*State Education Agency (SEA)* is the State Department of Education. The SEA is the organization that is responsible for the supervision of the state's public elementary and secondary schools (Weber & Rockoff, 1980).

*Local Education Agency* (LEA) also known as a school district. The LEA is the organization that is responsible for the supervision of local (city, town, county, etc.) public elementary and secondary schools (Weber & Rockoff, 1980).

*No Child Left Behind Act* (P.L. 107-110, 2001) “The law required states to establish rigorous systems that hold school districts and schools accountable for measurably improving student achievement” (Yell, 2005, p.75).

*Differentiated instruction*. “The notion that changes can be made in many different aspects of the teaching/learning process that enable diverse student learning needs to be met” (Friend, 2007, p.48-52).

*Resource Room* is also known as the resource class. “Resource support usually is assigned to students who need services in a separate setting between 21 percent and 60 percent of the day” (Friend, 2007, p.48-52).

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Researchers, educators and parents have been concerned with the educational outcomes of individuals with disabilities for a variety of reasons. Friend (2007) suggested that some individuals are interested in special needs services because they have children or family members with special needs. Whereas others become interested because they have planned a career in which knowledge of individuals with special needs is essential to their success, teachers being the biggest example.

This chapter will explore the various pieces of literature related to inclusion, k-12 education and co-teaching. This chapter will begin with a brief overview of special education, leading into (a) a review of the literature search procedures, (b) the history of inclusion, (c) the culture of special education, (d) perspectives of co-teachers, (e) social styles theory, and (f) the theoretical framework.

With the number of students receiving special education services increasing, it is imperative that k-12 school administrators and education researchers take the time to examine the programs, models, and theories that are available to parents and educators. Friend (2007) stated that in 2002- 2003, the most recent year for which data is available, approximately 6.8 million children from birth to 21 years of age received special education services required by federal law. Acknowledging the number of special education students helps one to rationalize the need for special education services and



teachers. Special education services allow students to receive an appropriate education regardless of their disability. One law that has ensured that all students receive an appropriate education is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

According to Yell (2005), IDEA aims to ensure that all children receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and special services to assist in meeting their educational needs. Under Part B of IDEA, each state and its public agencies must ensure that a free appropriate public education (FAPE) is made available to all students with specific disabilities in mandated age ranges, and that the rights and protections of Part B are extended to eligible students and their parents. In addition, administrators at the U.S. Department of Education state that FAPE includes, among other elements, the provision of special education and related services provided at no cost to parents, in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP). The IEP is the major mechanism for ensuring that a child receives a FAPE. The IEP serves as a blueprint for the child's special education needs and any related services (Yell, 2005).

In order to meet the criteria of a free appropriate public education, students must be placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE). According to Friend (2007) students should be placed in settings most like that of typical, chronological peers in which they can succeed when provided with the needed support and services. It is assumed that the LRE for most students with disabilities is the general education setting; however, the law spells out additional settings in which students may be educated.

The emphasis on LRE essentially has provided part of the conceptual framework for the movement toward inclusive education. There are many different definitions for inclusion; however, the work of Scheffel, Kallam, Smith, Hoernicke, and Fort Hays

(1996) provides the most comprehensive definition. They define inclusion as a way of providing a normalized education for students with disabilities. Normalization is the belief that all individuals with disabilities be provided the opportunity to live as normally as possible in daily society and be full participants in social, educational and vocational activities.

Nilholm (2006) wrote that inclusion is typically understood as diversity between students and should be valued; also, that variation is a natural condition for schooling. A common use of inclusion is that it is primarily an idea that applies to the classroom level. Therefore, inclusion, in this case, means that students of all kinds attend the same classes, that variation is celebrated within the classroom, and that students have a right to participate, to learn, and to build new social relationships (Nilholm, 2006).

Formerly, the trend in education was that students with disabilities were excluded from general, state and district wide standardized assessments. The laws now state that when possible students with disabilities are to be included with appropriate accommodations (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). Salend (2007) and Cronis and Ellis (2000) have coined this theory as the inclusionary movement. Salend (2007) stated that the inclusionary movement “seeks to create schools and other social institutions based on meeting the needs of all learners as well as respecting and learning from other’s differences” (p.114). In order to accomplish this task some schools have turned to the service delivery model of co-teaching.

As stated previously, co-teaching has become one of the many collaborative strategies that schools are looking at in an effort to meet the needs of all students within the educational framework of inclusion. Murawski and Dieker (2008) proposed that co-

teaching is a service delivery option intended to address the needs of special education students in an inclusive setting. This is done by assigning a generalist and a special service provider to teach together in the same setting. For true co-teaching to occur, both professionals must co-plan, co-instruct, and co-assess a diverse group of students in the same general education classroom (Murawski & Dieker, 2008).

Kohler-Evans (2006) argued that co-teaching is a forced marriage and individuals must discuss roles in order to foster cohesive instruction. Like most relationships it possesses its pros and cons. She wrote that the “outcome of this dubious union is often a marriage that crumbles in front of the kids because the time and care needed to nurture and sustain it has not been provided” (p.206).

Furthermore, “co-teaching teams have been forced into the general education classroom where veteran teachers feel insulted to have a special education teacher placed in the room with the expectation that they both teach content area critical concepts” (Kohler-Evans, 2006, p.206). Special education teachers are discouraged because they have been left homeless, having their classrooms ripped away from them, and have been plunged into a classroom that has been inhabited by an expert general education teacher who knows what needs to be taught and how to teach it (Kohler-Evans, 2006).

According to Salend and Johansen(1997), co-teaching involves general educators and supportive service personnel working collaboratively to teach students with disabilities in general education settings. Support service personnel can range from a special education teacher to a speech language therapist. Austin (2001) refers to this model as the “teaming model,” in which the special and general educators divide equitably the task of lesson planning and student assessment. Luckner (1999) defines co-

teaching as the process in which two or more professionals jointly plan, organize, and deliver instruction to a diverse group of students in a single physical area. Luckner (1999) also mentions that co-teaching is “sometimes called team teaching, co-enrollment, collaborative teaching or cooperative teaching” (p.25). Despite the differences in wording, these authors all agree on the common attributes of the co-teaching dynamic. It involves a regular education teacher and a specialist working together to reach a common goal of providing a quality education for all students in their classroom (Murawski & Dieker 2008). According to Kloo and Zigmond (2008), advocates have suggested that the co-teaching model will ensure that students with IEPs receive whatever support is necessary for them to function successfully in general education classrooms.

Nevertheless, what is the research base for co-teaching? Kloo and Zigmond (2008) stated that co-taught classrooms draw from the strengths of both the general education teacher, who has mastered the structure, content, and pacing of the general education curriculum, and the special educator who recognizes distinctive learning needs of individual students and modifies instruction to match those needs (Kloo & Zigmond, 2008).

Additionally, Kloo and Zigmond (2008) suggested that the majority of published literature on co-teaching focuses on logistics, typically emphasizing that co-teaching is difficult to do well. Conversely, Kloo and Zigmond (2008) explain that there are several advantages to the co-teaching model: The first advantage is the general education teacher being able to enjoy “a second adult who can provide not only assistance to students but also adult conversation” (p.13). Aside from conversation, “the special education teacher feels liberated from the confines of the special education resources room” (p.13).

However, does co-teaching work? “Research on the effectiveness of co-teaching is still in its infancy” (p.14).

Cook and Friend (1995) identified six different types of co-teaching models. The first being *One Teach, One Observe*. In this model the first teacher has the responsibility of management, including instruction and discipline. The second teacher is in a more passive role, systematically checking and observing either small or whole groups. This method has also been called One Teach, One Assist (Cook & Friend, 1995).

The second method is *One Teach, One Drift*. This model is almost exactly the same as One Teach, One Observe except for a few slight differences. The first teacher has the responsibility of the overall management of the class including instruction and discipline. While the second teacher circulates among the students to re-focus, answer questions, supplement instruction, deliver accommodations and modifications (Cook & Friend, 1995).

The third style is *Station Teaching*. With station teaching the teachers divide the lesson into three parts located at different stations. In two of the parts, instruction is delivered by one of the two teachers, in the third part, students are allowed to complete and review assignments independently. With this style, planning is believed to be much more in depth and strategic groups must be prepared before class (Cook & Friend, 1995).

The fourth model is *Parallel Teaching*. With parallel teaching both teachers teach the same information to two strategically split groups. Parallel teaching lowers the student-teacher ratio, therefore, it is frequently used when students need opportunities to respond aloud, to engage in hands-on activities, or to interact with one another. In parallel

teaching the teachers plan the instruction jointly, but each delivers it to a heterogeneous group consisting of half the class (Cook & Friend, 1995).

The fifth style is *Alternative Teaching*. In this model the first teacher manages the larger group and the second teacher works with the smaller group for specific reasons. The reasons include review and preview; catch up due to absence, language barrier, re-teach, assessment, and social skills (Cook & Friend, 1995).

The last style is *Team Teaching*. In team teaching the two teachers act as one. Both are involved in overall classroom management and might take turns leading the discussion or might speak while the other demonstrates. Essentially this style fosters an interactive workplace (Cook & Friend, 1995).

This literature review identified empirical studies associated with the history of inclusion, the culture of special education, perspective of co-teaching, and the theoretical framework of co-teaching. To provide a comprehensive yet relevant analysis, a time period of literature was established. According to Friend (2007), much of the early information about teaching individuals with disabilities focused on adults, therefore, this review briefly examined the historical foundation of inclusion in order to understand how thinking has changed and how services have grown for individuals with disabilities. Afterward this review focused on literature (ranging from 1960-present) that aligns with the four theoretical principles of productivity mentioned later. In addition, this review attempted to isolate the most important features of co-teaching in order to provide educators and administrators with significant, impartial information that they can use to create new policies.

## **Review Methods**

This review examined qualitative research on productivity and co-teaching methods used in elementary and secondary schools across the US in an attempt to isolate the most important features. A literature search was carried out in an effort to uncover studies that discuss any of the features of co-teaching and its historical underpinnings. Information was gathered primarily from electronic databases (ERIC, JSTOR, EBSCO, PsycINFO, Google Scholar, Academic Search Premier). International studies were examined where applicable. The conceptual framework for analyzing each piece of literature was based on the following questions.

1. What does it add to the knowledge dynamic?
2. What are the grades studied?
3. What is the sample size and design?
4. What is the quality of the data analysis, methods, and conclusions?
5. How does it fit with classic or current literature on the subject?
6. What type of references does the author use? (Peer reviewed or Non-Peer reviewed)
7. How do the results align with the accepted theoretical frameworks?

## **Parameters of the Review**

This review primarily focused on qualitative studies; quantitative studies were used where applicable. The limitations of this review are

1. Only studies that examine K-8 settings or span grades 6-12;
2. Special education delivery models that involve two teachers;

3. Only studies that include the following qualitative strategies: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research, narrative research and meta-synthesis.
4. Time frame of 1960- present
5. Only peer reviewed sources. Peer review is the accepted method for ensuring that information is of the highest quality. Articles are critically assessed by other scholars in the author's field or specialty before they are accepted for publication.

### **Literature Search Procedures**

#### **Criteria for Inclusion**

Criteria for studies included in this review were as follows:

1. Occurred in k-8 settings or span grades 6-12;
2. Examined special education delivery models that involve two teachers;
3. Studies that include the following qualitative strategies: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research, narrative research and meta-synthesis.
4. Published between 1960- present;
5. Published in peer-reviewed journals because peer reviewed adds a layer of academic strength and integrity;
6. Conceptual articles published in peer-reviewed journals to aid in the understanding of the scope of the problem and
7. For seminal works and underlying theories, books were used.



## History of Inclusion

The field of special education is relatively young in comparison to other disciplines and has experienced a number of changes over the past three decades. These changes have led to ideological division within the field. Cronis and Ellis (2000) stated that “social, political, legal, and scientific forces have created controversy and fragmentation among professionals and parents of students with disabilities” (p.639).

LaNear and Frattura’s (2007) description of the foundation of education and special education law helps to shed light on the injustices interwoven into the culture of education. In their narrative they examined a collection of literature related to law and the treatment of individuals with disabilities. Their synthesis of these articles uncovers many of the cultural aspects of special education that have paved the way for legislative enactments. LaNear and Frattura (2007) stated that, “Historically, it was more convenient to remove the disabled from the social mainstreaming than it was to integrate them in public schools or to provide them with jobs or training” (p.91). In the United States, public education is viewed as a birthright. However, a common mistake regarding public education is that it is guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Actually, education is not mentioned in the Constitution, because the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution requires that powers not specially granted to the United States in the Constitution are reserved to the states. Therefore, education is primarily the responsibility of the states (Yell, 2005).

According to LaNear and Frattura (2007), “by 1918, each of the states had enacted compulsory education law, compelling children of designated ages to attend schools” (p.91). The emerging benefit of forced attendance was that the states began

offering the general public an opportunity that had not previously existed; the opportunity to receive a state-funded education. “This action, instituted a framework for creating a new, state-sanctioned identity for children with disabilities that would lead to immeasurable injustices, the identity of the special needs student” (p.91).

Prior to the 1960s the education of individuals with special needs was conducted in separate schools (Will, 1986; Yell, 2005). In the 1950s, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) paved the way for all children to have access to an equal education. According to LaNear and Frattura (2007), *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which many consider to be the most significant school inclusion case, is filled with inequities. “Despite the apparent guarantees inherent in the Brown Court’s rationale, a unitary, integrated system of public education – in racial terms- still eludes us 50 years later” (p. 94). However, in developing an unbiased map of historical events, it is important to identify the significance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case in relationship to students with disabilities. The rationale provided by the court in this case, of equal protection to ethnically diverse students, is often analogized to students with disabilities (LaNear & Frattura, 2007; Yell, 2005).

During the 1960s, there was a national effort to improve the educational opportunities for students with mental retardation. The Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Construction Act (P.L. 88-164, 1963) (as cited in Yell, 2005) was one of the first acts to ensure that individuals with mental retardation are provided opportunities to succeed where developmentally appropriate. Following this act was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 89-10, 1965) that created the framework for an all-inclusive plan for re-addressing the disparity of educational opportunities for

economically disadvantaged children. It essentially developed into the legal foundation upon which early special education legislation was born (LaNear & Frattura, 2007). Soon after, this act would receive four amendments, (P.L. 89-313, 1965), (P.L. 89-750, 1966), (P.L. 90-247, 1968) (P.L. 93-380, 1974) (as cited in Yell, 2005).

Coupled with this act is the Handicapped Children's Early Education Assistance Act (P.L. 90-538, 1968) which promoted initiatives like Head Start. Head Start is a program that was geared toward children with disabilities. Following these acts came the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. According to Yell (2005) "section 504 is a brief section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is a powerful law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities" (p.117). Yell (2005) provided researchers with a compressive synopsis of this law, he stated

No otherwise qualified individuals with a disability in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or any activity receiving Federal financial assistance. ( section 504, 29 U.S.C § 794(a)).  
(p.117)

Because public schools receive federal funds, section 504 protects those students with disabilities from experiencing certain levels of discrimination throughout the United States (Yell, 2005). These acts and their amendments essentially fueled the movement to abandon segregated environments. This movement is rooted in the normalization principle developed by Wolfenberger (1972). This principle states that if deviant persons are treated in a normal manner in normative settings they would act normally. What followed this theory was a period of court ordered de-institutionalization and

mainstreaming of adults and school aged persons with disabilities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (1975), also known as public law (94-142, 1975), and its amendments (PL 98-199 and PL 99-457) were passed: requiring that all students with disabilities be educated in the least restrictive environment (Cronis & Ellis, 2000).

During the 1980s there was a movement to merge general and special education children together called the Regular Education Initiative (REI). Kavale and Forness (2000) stated that REI was based on the assumption that: “Students are more alike than different, so truly ‘special’ instruction is not required; good teachers can teach all students” (p.281). Advocates of this theory also suggest that all students would be “provided with a quality education without reference to traditional special education categories” (p.281).

The laws associated with inclusion have seen a number of changes and updates since *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The most recent is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (P.L. 105-17, 1997) and its amendment (P.L.108-446, 2004). This act supported the practice that students with disabilities will receive general education placement and clarified procedures for effectively implementing inclusion. Inclusionary practices have had quite an impact on subsequent education reforms. The amendment of 1997 (P.L. 105-17, 1997), outlined the responsibility of educators to involve students with disabilities in the general education curriculum and to consider additional aids and services as part of the IEP process in order to achieve inclusion (Cronis & Ellis, 2000).

As mentioned previously, numerous laws that have been adopted by the field of special education are derived from social, political, community, and family initiatives.

The power of these initiatives in the absence of regular, frequent, and reliable evaluation of programs has led many schools and districts to abandon technically adequate strategies for more palatable, popular packages (Cronis & Ellis, 2000). In 2001 Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act (P.L. 107-110, 2001) which emphasizes accountability and scientifically based research. NCLB includes special needs students within its assessment schemes. LaNear and Frattura (2007) stated that “Under NCLB, these students have to make adequately yearly progress (AYP) alongside their non-disabled peers” (p.102). At the same time, NCLB has come under fire due to its one-size-fits all assessment schemes (LaNear & Frattura, 2007). “Moreover, the inclusion of assessment scores of students with disabilities has led to sanctions for some schools; these punitive results have the potential to demonize students with disabilities as the ‘cause’ of school failure” (p.102).

### **Synthesis**

Over the past few decades the field of special education has seen a number of reforms related to the inclusion of individuals with disabilities. All of these reforms have been focused on improving the educational opportunities for students with disabilities by allowing them increased access to the general education curriculum. The literature suggests that including students with disabilities in the general education class has proven benefits for both the students and the teachers. Many of the amendments associated with the after mentioned acts seem to flow in a logical sequence: meaning that the amendments extend or clarify the provisions outlined in the act. The process of reformation in the field of education illustrates the tireless efforts of parents and advocacy groups in the courts and legislature of this country (Yell, 2005).

Within the academic field of special education there are a number of problems that exist within the research literature due to politics, an over reliance on expert opinion, and the ubiquitous screening of negative results (Cronis & Ellis 2000). Continuing in this line of thinking, Cronis and Ellis (2000) stated that “research has not been practitioner oriented and that consistent application of research based strategies can’t occur until collaborative models are adopted that establish bridges between researchers and consumers” (p.642).

### **Culture of Special Education**

Does culture effect how educators provide special education services?

Researchers in the United States and other countries have struggled to answer this question as they provide appropriate assessment and intervention to a multicultural population of children with disabilities and their families (Lamorey 2002).

A review of the literature pertaining to cultural norms within the field of special education resulted in three over arching themes. These themes include the role of special educators, the attrition of special educators, and the social impact of inclusion on the community. At first glance these ideas might seem isolated, however, they are interrelated through their uncovering of the customs of special education.

Taking a closer look at the position of special educators, Hoover and Patton (2008) discussed five important roles in which special educators should possess skills to effectively educate learners within a multitiered system. Hoover and Patton (2008) stated that a multitiered system contains three instructional components: high quality instruction, supplemental instruction, and intensive intervention. Special educators must define themselves and operate within this structure. To make multitiered instruction

successful, special educators must develop five contemporary role areas: data driven decision making, collaboration, differentiation, emotional supports, and intervention. However, Hoover and Patton (2008) point out a number of noteworthy challenges that exist for special educators, such as ensuring that seamless levels of support exist, in addition to supporting appropriate instruction for all learners. Hoover and Patton's (2008) article primarily focuses on the role of special educators in implementing multitiered instructional programs. Their article is a narrative and is essentially an examination of other researchers' work. For all intents and purposes their article supports the idea that special educators are facilitators.

Hoover and Patton's (2008) article upholds the ideas presented by Stainback (1989) in his article "Support Facilitation: An Emerging Role for Special Educators." Stainback (1989) suggested that there are a number of individuals who can support teachers and students, however, there is no individual responsible for organizing a network of supports for teachers and students as well as special educators. There is a need for someone knowledgeable in this work to collaborate with the regular class teachers. Therefore, it is assumed that "it is the special educator who could most easily and effectively assume the support facilitation role" (p.151). Alternatively, Vannest, Soares, Harrison, Brown and Parker. (2010) wrote that "special education teachers spend small amounts of their day in instruction and nearly equal amounts of time completing paperwork and performing support roles" (p.86).

Much like Hoover and Patton (2008), Stainback (1989) stated that there are skills needed in order to be a support facilitator. "The skills needed by the support facilitator are similar to those skills needed by educational consultants: providing technical

assistance, coordinating programs, and communicating with other professionals and students” (p.151). The Stainback (1989) article is another example of a narrative which posits that special educators serve as support facilitators that can be involved in activities such as locating specialists, team teaching, and helping to organize inclusion.

Conversely, the ideas presented by both Hoover and Patton’s (2008) and Stainback (1989) are fundamentally flawed. Nowhere do they stress the role of special educators as leaders within the classroom. The overall tone of both of these articles is that “facilitator” could also mean assistant. The work of York-Barr, Sommerness, Duke and Ghre (2005) examines the leadership role of special educators through focus groups. York-Barr et al. (2005) gathered groups of 7-8 people at 103 different sites and interviewed them over the course of 2 days. They discussed key points related to responsibilities and roles within special education. Their findings suggested that a high level of leadership skills and special educator competence is needed in order to create and sustain effective inclusive education programs. York-Barr et al. (2005) affectionately compared special educators to air traffic controllers. “This metaphor serves to emphasize the importance of keeping the vision or goal in clear focus while simultaneously observing and orchestrating the smallest details” (p.211). The ideas presented by York-Barr et al. (2005), Hoover and Patton (2008), and Stainback (1989) provide a great deal of insight into the role of special educators except they lack an understanding of the human factor that encapsulates a person’s role.

In understanding the role of a special education teacher it is also important to identify what draws someone to pursue this career. Bateman (1994) suggested that some people are drawn to special education by a set of holistic values that are centered on child



engagement tactics. Whereas others are drawn by the traditional scientific aspects of special education and place more emphasis on outcomes and student assessment.

Bateman (1994) provides little to no information about design, sample size, grade levels, methods, and data analysis. This leads one to believe that his work is more narrative and leans toward advocacy.

Bateman's (1994) article, even with its flaws, provides a compelling argument for why people are drawn to the field of special education. After identifying several recruitment factors, the importance of retaining qualified special educators becomes equally as important in understanding the culture of the field. Billingsley (1993) addresses this in her scholarly paper, which reviews research findings related to teacher retention. Because her paper is a review of research findings, many of the resources used are from second and third parties. However, she compensates for this in her synthesis of new ideas espoused from the literature. Based on her major findings, Billingsley (1993) stated that higher attrition rates among special educators are often attributed to the stress involved in working with the special population. "However, there is little empirical data to support this claim" (p. 140). She continued by stating that "Although stress and burnout are problems for teachers in general and relate to intent to leave teaching, they do not explain why people leave" (p.140).

Billingsley (1993) suggests that a lack of administrative support is one of the biggest factors that influence job dissatisfaction and teacher attrition. She continues by stating,

Administrators influence the conditions in which teachers work; therefore, it is not surprising that administrative support has been consistently linked to attrition

and retention. Lack of administrative support has been associated with both general and special educators.... Both special and general education teachers who experience higher levels of principal support are likely to be less stressed... and more satisfied with their job. (pp.153-154)

Wald and National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education (1998) published an administrator's guide that addressed the issue of attrition within special education and how to prevent it. They believe that mentoring programs should be in place throughout an educator's professional development. They elaborate by suggesting that schools should have voluntary mentoring or professional network programs in place where seasoned professionals are paired with new professionals to share information and professional experience.

In a similar line of thinking, Otto and Arnold (2005) constructed a study that described the level of administrative support perceived by special education teachers in South Texas. A questionnaire was distributed to both special education teachers and supervisors; the sample size was 228. The data was then reviewed by special education professors at accredited universities in order to ensure credibility. Otto and Arnold's (2005) findings suggest that special educators in South Texas perceived their administrators as supportive. "This is in sharp contrast to the literature's description of responses from beginning special education teachers, those who had less than five years experience" (p.4).

Aside from professional factors affecting special educator attrition, there are personal factors. Gonzalez and National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1995) argued that personal factors make up the final component of teacher

attrition. “Among demographic variables, the age of the teacher is the most consistent correlate of attrition, with teachers under the age of 35 posing the greatest attrition risk”(pp.6-7). In addition to age, Gonzalez and NASDSE (1995) discuss gender and race as they relates to attrition. “Although the research results are mixed, it appears that in special education, young female teachers leave the classroom at a higher rate” (p.7). In regards to race, the attrition rate is even foggier: “However, teachers who are racially different from the majority of their students appear to be at great risk for attrition” (p.7).

As stated previously, the role of special educators and the attrition of special educators are important variables when trying to understand the culture of special education. In addition to these two factors is the social impact of special education on the community. Bateman (1994) underscores one of the most controversial questions regarding the impact of special education on the community; who is to be served? Bateman (1994) stated that “special education is now both a service to children with disabilities and a safety net to some of the regular education fallouts” (p.513).

Bateman (1994) continues by proposing that the very nature of regular education is to deal with norms, averages, and groups. Whereas special education is more equipped to deal with outlier individuals that fall on either side of the spectrum. This is the primary difference that “underlies much of the tension between special education and regular education” (p.513). The ongoing relationship between special educators and regular educators is strained. She stated that from the perspective of the special educator:

We frequently, if not always, believed we could serve those children better than regular education did. As a result, communication between special and regular

educators sometimes encountered difficulties around this perception that special educators were, or considered themselves, better trained and qualified. (p.512)

The issues presented by Bateman (1994) focus on the lack of collaboration between special educators and regular educators. Welch (1998) proposed that collaboration in its purest form is a conceptual umbrella in which issues, assets, and solutions are shared. Similarly, Welch (1998) suggested that collaboration creates an atmosphere that promotes active problem solving.

One of the chief missions of the special education field is to create an inclusive school culture. There are a host of underlying characteristics that impact inclusive education. The work of Zoller, Ramanathan, and Yu (1999) helped to enrich the current body of literature on this topic by way of their ethnographic study of an urban elementary school. Their work is substantiated by their detailed explanation of the research methods, data collection and analysis. In studying a complex organization like the Connolly Elementary School Zoller, Ramanathan, and Yu (1999) chose to conduct a year-long ethnography which included participant observation, formal and informal interviewing and document review. Their results emerged through the process of triangulation and to check for potential biases they conducted “member checks” by sharing their findings with the participants.

The work of Zoller et al. (1999) addressed two important issues in the field of education, inclusive leadership and shared language. According to Zoller et al. (1999), “every school has a unique cultural climate that is shaped by administrative decision making and other actions” (p.163). They continue by suggesting that a principal’s values can greatly influence a school’s administrative practices. They give the example of top-

down management, which accomplishes cultural transformation at the surface level. “This surface level transformation is easy to accomplish but difficult to sustain” (p.163). Conversely, “a participatory approach that involves understanding and adopting common underlying assumptions can achieve long-term cultural change” (p.163).

In their piece, Zoller et al. (1999) proposed that a person exhibits a sense of belonging to an organizational culture by sharing language. In their study at the Connolly School they found that the inclusion of students with disabilities was highly valued by students, teachers, and parents of both typical children and disabled children. “Children, teachers and parents from diverse backgrounds were actively recruited in order to extend the heterogeneity of the building.... Although this diversity complicated the educational mission it was nearly universally valued” (p.170). “In this inclusive culture, students were not intruders that needed to be integrated into the Connolly School community -- they already belonged. Because students were talked about and understood to be part of the Connolly School community the goal was schooling, not ‘including’ (p.172). By the same token it is equally important to recognize that even with their scientific methods, Zoller et al. (1999) come across as advocates with the language used throughout their study.

Continuing with this thought, Daniel (1997) discussed the impact of inclusive education in four important areas within the realms of both special and general education: academic achievement, student behavior, self-esteem, and parental attitudes. Daniel’s (1997) piece adds to the knowledge dynamic and helps to enlighten members of the field through his unbiased examination of inclusion advocates and critics. Daniel’s (1997) piece provides information that can be used to help redefine how special education

interfaces with general education. The purpose of his study was to determine the effects of student placement versus none-placement in an inclusion classroom. In his study, he used a quasi-experimental design comprised of third-through fifth grade students (n=207) from 12 intact classrooms; eliminating the possibility of random assignment of participants. Variables included: (a) parent concerns about their children's school program; (b) teacher- and parent reported instances of students' problem behaviors; (c) students' academic performance; (d) and students' self-reported self-esteem. Daniel (1997) used discriminate analyses to analyze the data.

Daniel's (1997) thorough analysis of inclusion helps practitioners and researchers within the field of education make informed decisions regarding acceptance and rejection of certain theories. As stated previously, Daniel (1997) examination of academic achievement, student behavior, self-esteem, and parental attitudes helps to illuminate the dichotomous nature of full inclusion versus no inclusion. He states that "arguments for inclusion generally center around the benefits derived both academically and socially for children with disabilities" (p.68). In the same vein, he continued by suggesting that advocates believe that children with disabilities are expected to adhere to the higher standards that usually exist in the regular classroom setting. Advocates for full inclusion desire all students with disabilities be placed in a regular classroom, regardless of their disability. "Full inclusionists favor the abolishment placement options, advocating instead that all special education students should receive instruction in the regular education classroom" (p.68). This in turn implies that special education provided outside the regular education classroom is ineffective and student's potential is limited.

“Critics argue that many students with disabilities are best served in non-inclusive settings” (p.68). Daniel and King (1997) propose that even students who were gifted were originally pulled from the regular education classroom because they were not well served in the general population. According to Daniel and King (1997) inclusion is a one size fits all mentality that disregards the demands of individual students. “When the demands of servicing students with disabilities, some severe, are added to the regular education classroom, the needs of low-average, and above-average students are often ignored” (p.68). Daniel (1997) concluded his study by stating:

There seems to be no consistent pattern in achievement differences. There does appear, however seem to be a higher instance of behavior problems among students in inclusion classrooms, implying that the inclusion teacher may devote much time to discipline problems, thereby diminishing time spent on instruction. Moreover, the behavior problems brought into the inclusion classroom by students with special needs may potentially have negative effects on other students. Although we used no pre-assessment measure of student self-esteem than students in the present study, the results indicated that students placed in inclusion classrooms have lower self-esteem than students in non-inclusion classrooms do. (p.79)

In addition to examining the impact of placement in the general education setting on the academic performance of students with disabilities, studies also have been conducted to examine the non-educational, social, and self-concept outcomes for students with disabilities educated in inclusive settings (Salend, 1999). Vaughn et al. (1996) examined the effects on inclusive placements on the social performance of 16 students

with learning disabilities, 27 low achieving students, and 21 average and high achieving students. The intention of their study was to broaden the knowledge dynamic on the social functioning of students in second, third, and fourth grade who participated in an inclusive classroom for an entire year. Vaughn et al. (1996) quasi-experimental study allows researchers to incorporate her findings into the classical literature on inclusion. Vaughn et al. (1996) study was conducted in an urban school located within a large school district in the south eastern US. The participants in the study were 64 students in the second grade. The ethnic distribution was 80% minority, White non-Hispanic. “Nominations and peer ratings of liking provided an index of peer acceptance and social status from the perspective of classmates” (p.601). In this study Vaughn et al. (1996) placed loneliness and dissatisfaction on a scale. Their findings suggested that peer acceptance of special needs students in inclusive settings is lower than that of general students. Learning disabled students are significantly less liked than their general classmates; in contrast, this does not diminish their self concept. Vaughn et al. (1996) stated:

The students with LD in these inclusive settings demonstrated self concepts that were on par with other achieving subgroups for the factors of physical appearance, friendship and overall self worth. For proponents of inclusion, this could be interpreted as a positive finding, as there is significant research suggesting that the overall self-concept of student with LD is lower in pull-out resource room settings when compared with that of peers. However, others might not interpret this data so positively. For the factor of academic self-concept, students with LD scored significantly lower than AHA (average/ high achieving)



students.... These findings need to be interpreted with caution for several reasons. We know surprisingly little about the reciprocal friendships and the loneliness of students with LD. (p.605)

On a similar note, Bunch and Valeo (2004) state that “one aspect of education is friendship. Advocates believe that friendship between students with disabilities and typical students develop best in inclusive setting” (p.62).

### **Synthesis**

The term culture within the realm of special education is very difficult to define, due to its complex meaning depending on the demographic being studied. In reviewing the literature on the culture of special education, there were three themes that presented themselves: the role of special educators, the attrition of special educators, and the social impact of inclusion on the community. These three themes help to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the cultural norms and patterns within the field of special education. The role that one plays in a particular organization changes and defines both them and the culture. From the studies presented in this literature review special educators are viewed as both facilitators and leaders. These findings suggest that within the culture of special education there is no definitive role for special educators and the existing role is constantly evolving.

The rate in which individuals leave a particular field is also important in defining or understanding the culture of that field. One could use the business world as an example. When an employee leaves, most industries provide an exit survey in order to understand the inner workings of the organization. After examining the attrition of special educators, one can conclude that there is no clear answer as to why teachers leave.

However, some factors that contribute to attrition are age, experience, administrative support, and gender.

Lastly, culture should be considered and understood when implementing an inclusive model. The studies provided in this review suggest that inclusion and other school reforms must examine the organizational culture of schools in order to be successful. In summary, the work of researchers in school culture is complicated and cumbersome primarily due to the lack of a uniform definition of organizational culture within the literature.

### **Perspectives of Co-Teachers**

Recent literature reviews on the topic of co-teaching have concluded that effectiveness data only provides limited support for the use of co-teaching. According to Mastropiere et al. (2005) and Scruggs et al. (2007) this could be due to the overall problems with co-teaching research. These problems include: excluding pertinent information on measures; only interviewing successful co-teaching teams; finding, in several cases, that teacher personality was the most important variable in success, lacking a consistent definition of co-teaching, and stating results subjectively (Mastropiere et al., 2005; Scruggs et al., 2007). Furthermore, Morocco and Aguilar (2002) stated that “One limitation of current research is that it mainly provides information about co-teaching in elementary grades” (p.318). This section of the literature review will attempt to uncover teachers perspectives of co-teaching using Mastropiere et al. (2005) five problems as an evaluative framework.

Currently the literature on co-teaching has established no consistent terminology. Some studies refer to co-teaching as cooperative teaching, whereas others call it

collaborative teaching. However, these three terms tend to have one meaning: a restructuring of teaching styles in which two or more educators possessing a unique set of skills work in a coordinated fashion to jointly teach academically and behaviorally heterogeneous groups of students (Morocco & Aguilar, 2002).

Educators involved in cooperative teaching teams share responsibilities for all activities related to planning and delivery of instruction, in addition to evaluating, grading, and disciplining students (Salend & Johnansen, 1997). There are a number of issues present in this work dynamic. Through the use of open-ended and non-directed dialogue, Salend and Johnansen (1997) examined the perspectives and experiences of teacher relationships. Their study was heavily grounded in the interviewing of teachers at a small k-6 school. The results of their study helped to emphasize three themes that are prevalent throughout the literature: respecting skills, confronting differences, and administrative support. However, in their eagerness to present their findings Salend and Johnansen (1997) omitted important information on measures and analysis. Even with this blemish, their research is still note worthy in the examination of teacher perception.

Salend and Johnansen (1997) suggested that the teachers in their study respected each other's skills and areas of expertise. In some interviews the teachers were grateful to share best practices. However, they noted that there was some initial apprehension and concerns regarding partnerships. In addition, "Philosophical differences surfaced throughout the school year" (p.7), and teachers in these situations "tended not to address their differences and apprehensions directly in the beginning, the teachers later began to confront and discuss them" (p.7). Aside from resolving differences, there is a need for administrative support. Salend and Johnansen (1997) proposed that the support of the

principal is instrumental in the success of teacher collaboration. In their study they noted that the principal met with the teachers frequently to discuss problems and offer support. In many cases the school's vision for its model of co-teaching is shaped by the actions of the administration. Morocco and Aguilar (2002) addressed this concern in their study of school-wide co-teaching models in an urban middle school. In part of their study they conducted extended (90 min) interviews with key school leaders who were involved in decision making related to the schools co-teaching models. The analysis of their data reflected a grounded theory approach.

According to Morocco and Aguilar (2002), the administration at one of the schools felt strongly that their students needed consistent relationships and a sense of belonging. Therefore, with a state grant, the principal chose to work with education consultants to train teachers in research-based practices. In addition, the principal involved teachers in the development of a co-teaching model. The model evolved through three formats, a collaborative instruction model, a traveling model, and a school-wide model. The collaborative instruction model included classrooms with 10 general education students and 10 special education students with a generalist and a specialist. In the traveling model a special education teacher followed a cohort of students with disabilities from one classroom to another to service those students. Lastly, the school wide model involved placing students with disabilities in heterogeneous classrooms in all areas. Special education teachers were full members of the interdisciplinary teams and were involved in planning. This feature of the model helps to explain the high levels of respect within these teaching teams. This study demonstrates how some school administrators incorporate organizational structures to provide consistent support for

teacher collaboration. Using the study by Mastropiere et al. (2005) as an analytic guide, this study only examined situations where co-teaching was successful, therefore part of the story is missing. In a later piece, Scruggs et al. (2007) developed a meta-synthesis of qualitative research on co-teaching in inclusive classrooms. In conducting a qualitative meta-synthesis Scruggs et al. (2007) stated that

Unlike quantitative synthesis (meta-analysis) of group experimental research reports, qualitative metasythesis is not concerned with summarizing or reducing findings to a common, standardized metric, such as a mean effect size. Rather, the purpose is to integrate themes and insight into a higher order synthesis that promotes broad understandings of the entire body of research while still respecting the integrity of the individual reports. (p.395)

Keeping with the theme of administrative support, Scruggs et al. (2007) stated that “in addition to reported benefits, teachers also expressed a number of needs that in their view must be met for co-teaching to be successful. Primary among these needs was administrative support” (p.403). Scruggs et al. (2007) extracted key themes from the list of authors on the issue of administrative support and concluded that there was “No disconfirming evidence that administrative support was not necessary.... Administrative support was seen to be linked to a number of additional issues” (p.403) this included teachers beliefs about co-teaching.

Luckner (1999) stated that “co-teaching requires that teachers have respect and high regard for each other. It asks two or more professionals with distinctly different training and experiences to plan and to react to situations in a united manner” (p.29). Austin (2001) addressed this idea in his survey of teacher’s beliefs about co-teaching. In

his study, he surveyed 139 collaborative teachers from nine school districts in northern New Jersey who taught in k-12 classrooms. The study was designed to provide information relative to how co-teachers perceive their current experience in the classroom. The survey data was analyzed using the statistical software package SPSS9.0 for Windows. According to Austin (2001), both the general and special educators suggested that “the general education co-teacher did the most in the inclusive classroom” (p.248). In a similar vein he stated, “This may be due to the fact that the special education co-teacher is typically the visitor in the classroom and is often viewed as the expert on curriculum adaptation and remediation, whereas the general education co-teacher is often regarded as being more expert in the content area” (p.252).

“In addition, there was a consensus among special education and general education co-teachers that, generally they worked well together” (Austin, 2001 p.248). Nevertheless, the demographic data revealed that “the majority of the co-teachers taught social studies and English/ language arts, and mathematics” (p.252). Austin (2001) suggested that this could be due to the fact that language arts is more conducive to verbal instruction and co-teachers of English may find the subject more rewarding due to the greater opportunity for student interaction. Another important finding discussed in Austin’s (2001) study was “ the discovery that a majority of the co-teachers surveyed and interviewed had not volunteered for the experience and yet a major percentages indicated that they considered co-teaching worthwhile” (p.252). Further study should be conducted in this area in order to understand the importance of volunteering for collaborative teaching assignments.

According to Austin (2001), the participants in the survey stated that the general education teacher did more work in the inclusion setting than the special education teacher. If this is true in this study, what does that say about the competency of the special education teacher? Minke and Bear (1996) addressed this in their study of teachers' experiences in inclusive classrooms. In their study, over 185 teachers completed a survey of attitudes toward several basic assumptions regarding inclusion. One of the topics that they examined was the perception of competence of special education teachers. This topic was broken down into four distinct items organized in a table.

1. Special education teachers are better trained than regular education teachers to teach children with mild disabilities.
2. Special education teachers are more effective than regular education teachers in teaching children with mild disabilities.
3. Special education teachers use different teaching methods than regular teachers.
4. Competency in managing the behavior of children with and without mild disabilities. (pp. 160-169)

With regards to teachers' perspectives of co-teaching, Minke and Bear (1996) results provide an interesting perspective on levels of competence in inclusive classrooms. Minke and Bear (1996) stated that "regular education teachers in inclusive classrooms reported levels of competence similar to those of special education teachers in managing behavior" (p.179) of special needs students. In contrast, "regular education teachers in traditional classrooms regarded themselves as less competent in both teaching and behavior management" (p.179) of special needs students. Additionally, regular

education teachers, “reported the lowest levels of satisfaction teaching children with disabilities” (p.179). Minke and Bear (1996) continued by stating:

These findings suggest support for the notion that regular education teachers can be positively disposed toward inclusion and find it successful even when they are assigned to the inclusive classes. However, it must be remembered that these views were held by teachers with access to the specific protected resources of two teachers (and often an aide) in the same room. (179)

Keeping with the framework presented by Mastropiere et al. (2005), one could conclude that Minke and Bear (1996) omitted important information on measures and some of their outcomes are stated subjectively. Therefore, how does one get a true picture of what is actually occurring in co-taught classroom with respect to teacher behavior? To answer this question, Harbort et al. (2007) collected observational data on two teaching teams by videotaping them. Each team was composed of a regular education teacher and a special education teacher in three classrooms in a secondary school setting. Two wide-angle security-type cameras were used, each being mounted on the ceiling in the rear corner above the door to each classroom. The cameras were set to automatically start taping 5 minutes before classes began and stop taping 5 minutes after classes ended.

The results provided by Harbort et al. (2007) have produced the most robust collection of data with regard to teacher behavior and perspective in co-taught classrooms seen in this literature review thus far. Harbort et al. (2007) broke teacher behavior into 11 operationalized categories, each with its own description. Of those 11 categories, 4 will be extracted for the purpose of this literature review: Presenting, Responding to, Teacher, and Non-interaction instructional task. For this study, “presenting,” meant the oral



delivery of instruction to students. “Responding to” referred to a teacher listening to a student’s comments or questions. “Teacher” referred to two teachers talking to each other and not directing any conversation toward the students. “Non-interaction instructional task” meant a teacher seems to be engaged in some type of instructional task, but was not interacting with students or the other teacher (i.e., paperwork).

Under the category of Presenting, Harbort et al. (2007) discovered that regular education teachers delivered instruction to large groups of students close to 30% of the time. The special education teachers almost never presented to the large group (.99%). For the category Responding to, they found that in all settings, all teachers interacted with all students. Generalists responded to students 22% of the time, and specialists responded 30% of the time. For the category Teacher, Harbort et al. (2007) discovered teachers exhibiting this behavior 5% of the time, which might lead one to believe that there is not much communication occurring. Lastly, for the category of Non-interaction instructional task, regular education teachers exhibited this behavior 28% of the time, whereas the special education teacher exhibited this behavior 4% of the time. In examining this study it is important to remember that behavior is a complex topic to analyze and not every physical action can be taken at surface value.

Keeping this in mind, Harbort et al. (2007) raised several important unaddressed themes within the realm of co-teaching. “The high percentage of instruction devoted to the large group instruction makes it unlikely that differentiated instruction, a highly effective instructional format, is being planned for” (p.21). In addition to differentiated instruction, a look at the time spent on behavior management is necessary. “Monitoring the classroom is important” (p.21), however, “it is not the most effective use of highly

trained special educators” (p.21). “Finally, a large percentage of instructional opportunities in this study seemed to be devoted to non-interaction instructional task (28.33%) for the general education teachers rather than the special educators (3.96%)” (p.21). All of these issues raised by Harbort et al. (2007) are worth further examination within the scheme of teacher perspectives in co-taught classrooms.

### **Synthesis**

An examination of the literature pertaining to the behaviors and perspectives of teachers in co-taught classrooms reveals two reoccurring themes, unequal distribution of work and administrative support. According to the studies in this literature review, some general education teachers feel as though they do more work than their special education co-teachers. This could be due to the notion that special educators are not the content experts. They are seen more as curriculum modifiers: especially in disciplines that are more rigorous, such as math and science. Further research is needed to investigate a possible casual relationship between distribution of work and teaching success in inclusive classrooms. With regards to administrative support, the literature reflects a unanimous opinion that administrative support is directly linked to the success of co-teaching relationships. For most schools the principal is supposed to be the educational leader. Essentially, the principal’s philosophy of co-teaching will drive many of the behaviors of the teachers and establish the cultural norms across the grade levels.

## Social Styles

According to the seminal works of Merrill and Reid (1981) and Bolton and Bolton (2009), individuals exhibit a range of behaviors within organizations. Psychologists refer to these behaviors as social style or behavioral style. It is important to note that within the field of psychology, the terms *social style* and *behavioral style* are used interchangeably. Social style is a difficult term to define, however scientists have framed the definition around one's actions. Darling and Walker (2001) stated,

Behavioral style reflects a pervasive and enduring set of interpersonal behaviors. Rather than focusing on the innermost workings of one's personality or on one's values or beliefs, behavioral style focuses on how one acts - that is, on what one says and does. Does a person ask questions or issue commands? Decide issues quickly or analyze the facts in detail before making decisions? Confront conflict situations directly or avoid them? (p.232)

"In the early 1960s, Dr. David Merrill, an industrial psychologist, developed a typology that focused on the behavioral differences between people" (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.18). This typology is divided into four distinct social styles, analytical, driving, amiable and expressive. Scientists today have morphed these four categories to fit a number of situations, however the basic characteristics stay the same.

At first glance, the social style theory appears to discriminately place individuals in categories. Some would even say that the theory is a means of stereotyping people. However, there is, "an anti-judgmental orientation built into the very foundation of this model. The people styles approach holds that there are no better or worse styles-just different ones" (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.19). Essentially the social style theory is a

comprehensive method of categorizing individuals within an organization to enhance our ability to communicate and act more effectively. “Experts on the workings of the mind found that we can’t avoid categorizing people or anything else that we want to understand and communicate about. We can categorize well or we can categorize poorly” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, pp.19-20).

According to Merrill and Reid (1981) the categorizing of individuals into the different social styles is all part of “discovering the public you.” Learning about others behavior is difficult; it is even more difficult to understand ones own behavior. “It is difficult to stand outside ourselves, so to speak, as observers and then to think about how our actions affect others” (Merrill & Reid, 1981, p.8). Merrill and Reid (1981) stated that

What we say and do, and how we say and do it, is our definition of behavior. The broad groupings of the things a person tends to say and do most often is called behavioral preferences: ways of talking and acting that we feel comfortable doing, what we come to like in ourselves and in others. But, these ways of behaving can sometimes become so habitual they can get in the way of our intentions...In fact, it’s fair to say that in more cases than not, it’s what we say and do and how we say and do it that gets us in trouble with others, not our intentions. (pp.10-11)

The four social styles Merrill and Reid (1981) examined are based on “the people styles grid” (p.36). This grid is composed of two axes. The x-axis forms the assertiveness continuum and the y-axis forms the responsiveness continuum, ultimately creating four quadrants. “A person’s level of assertiveness is the degree to which his behavior is typically seen by others as being forceful or directive” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.32). People often connect high levels of assertiveness with aggressiveness. This can be seen in

instances where individuals are more assertive than average. Conversely, some people assume that low levels of assertiveness equal submissiveness; this is not always true.

“While some less assertive people are submissive, most of these folks simply use less forceful ways to achieve their goals” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.33).

Responsiveness is the component to the social styles grid that runs along the y-axis. “A person’s level of responsiveness is the degree to which she is seen by others as showing her own emotions and demonstrating awareness of the feelings of others” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.34). It is assumed that individuals who are emotionally reserved lack feelings; this is not true. “People sometimes experience strong feelings but tend to hold them in” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.34). Various social data have revealed that a lack of response is an indicator of a person’s success or failure (Bolton & Bolton, 2009; Darling & Cluff, 1987; Merrill & Reid, 1981). With regard to both assertiveness and responsiveness, it is crucial to recognize that a person’s behavior is not restricted to one particular point of the continuum. “However, most of their behavior occurs within a rather narrow stretch of the continuum” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.34).

Some scientists have broken the quadrants of the social styles grid into subdivisions in order to create a description that is more concise. However, this study will only focus on the four major groups as they relate to co-teaching. According to Darling and Cluff (1987), “The general population is said to be divided (by statistical analysis) among the four styles” (p.351). Within organizations, “observable behavior is the key to understanding a person social style and the best way of discovering one’s own social style is to receive feedback based upon the observations of other people” (Darling & Cluff, 1987, p.351).

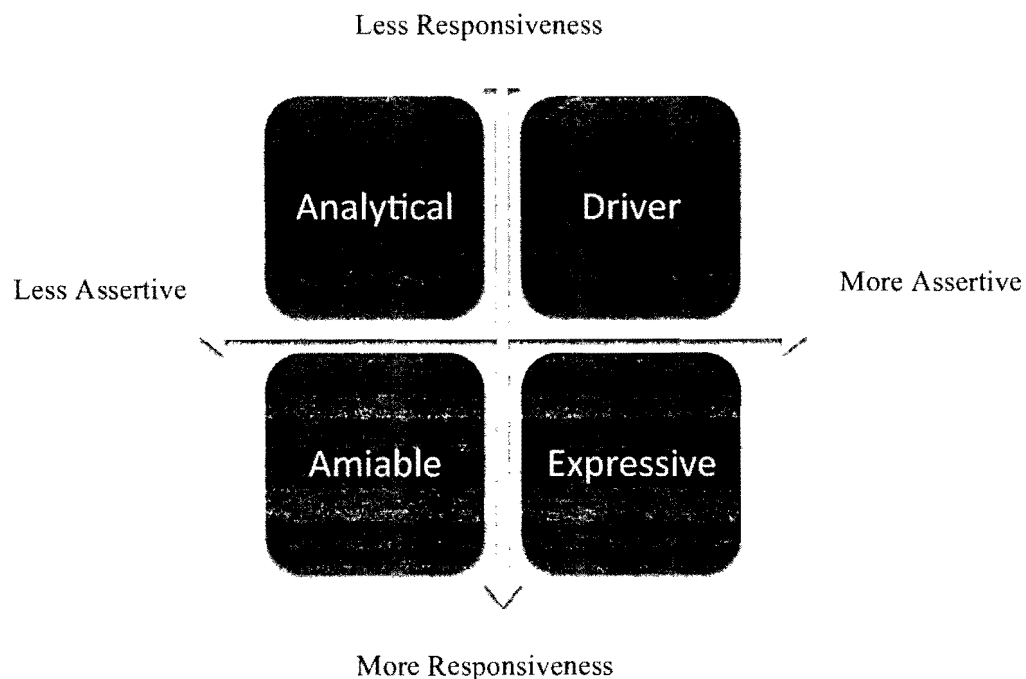
Each social style has a unique set of characteristics guided by assertiveness and responsiveness. The analytical style is located in the top left quadrant. It is associated with individuals who are less responsive and less assertive. “Analyticals combined greater-than-average emotional restraint with lower-than average assertiveness” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.36). Analyticals are best known for their precision and systematic approach to their work. Analyticals usually evaluate situations before acting. One weakness connected to the analytical style is inflexibility (Darling & Cluff, 1987; Merrill & Reid, 1981).

The driving style is located in the upper-right quadrant of the grid. It is associated with people who are less responsive and more assertive. “Drivers combined greater-than average emotional restraint with higher than average level of assertiveness” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.36). These individuals are task-oriented people who know what they want and how to get it. Drivers are considered very practical, objective, resolute, and result oriented. Drivers are also independent and willing to take a risk, if it means getting the job done. Weaknesses associated with the driver style are over-dominance and insensitivity (Darling & Cluff, 1987).

The amiable style is located in the lower-left quadrant of the grid. It is associated with individuals who are less assertive and more responsive. “Amiables integrate higher-than-average emotional responsiveness with less assertiveness than half of the population” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.36). Individuals reflecting this style tend to exhibit a great deal of empathy toward their colleagues. These individuals are usually characterized as cooperative, loyal, supportive, patient, and easygoing. The amiable’s

patience is said to bring out the best in their colleagues. The weaknesses associated with this style is passiveness (Darling & Cluff, 1987; Merrill & Reid,1981).

The expressive style is located in the lower-right quadrant of the grid. It represents individuals who are more assertive and more responsive. Expressives “blend a higher-than-average level of assertiveness with a higher-than-average level of emotional expressiveness” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.36). Expressives tend to look at the big picture. They will utilize innovative approaches to solve problems. Expressives are characterized as imaginative, friendly, enthusiastic, and persuasive. The weaknesses associated with this style are lack of discipline and unrealistic goals (Darling & Cluff, 1987). A summary of the social styles theory is best illustrated in Figure 1.



*Figure 1.* social styles grid

Note: Adapted from *People Styles at Work: Making Bad Relationships Good and Good Relationships Better* (p.36), by R. Bolton and D.G. Bolton, 2011, New York: AMACOM. Copyright 2011 by AMACO Books. Adapted with permission of the publisher.

Researchers have determined that each person has a dominant style. During ones developmental years, a dominant style begins to emerge, largely due to habit. According to Bolton and Bolton (2009), “Because that style has become habitual, its easiest for you to function with those patterns of behavior. This is your comfort zone” (p.36). However, it is important to recognize that “while one style predominates in each person, behaviorally we’re all a bit of a mix bag. We can all find traces or even large amounts of the other styles in our behavior” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.36).

### **Synthesis**

Examining the literature on social style is a crucial part of understanding why people behave in certain ways. Regardless of the industry, each person has a social style that helps him or her to operate at work. Within the realm of co-teaching, individuals reflect a range of social styles. Often teachers become frustrated with their co-teaching partner because of a lack of communication. Understanding social styles will ultimately lead to understanding co-teaching roles and co-teaching relationships.

Researchers have identified four main social styles, each possessing a unique set of characteristics. These social styles include analytical, driver, amiable, and expressive. Each one of these social styles is capable of explaining the different types of behaviors and relationships formed in co-taught classrooms. This idea is true because people are more predictable than we might think. “Although people sometimes act in erratic and inconsistent ways, human behavior isn’t nearly as random as is commonly believed. Behavioral scientists tell us that, in many ways, people are surprisingly predictable” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.22).



In addition to understanding the predictable nature of people, the social style model helps to identify the fundamental differences among people. Literature on co-teaching has highlighted a number of poor relationships that exist between special education teachers and general education teachers. Many of these relationships struggle due to underlying friction that has not been addressed. The social style model recognizes that “as long as you live, you’ll have at least some unwelcome and unproductive friction with others” (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.14). It is common in co-teaching and other professions to see people’s problems drag on with no solution in sight. Bolton and Bolton (2009) stated, “There are difficulties to be worked through in the best of relationships. In more troubled ones, people’s problems undermine productivity, erode friendships, and stress families” (p.14).

### **Theoretical Framework**

An examination of the literature pertaining to the theoretical framework of co-teaching reveals no concrete foundation for this concept. Most of the literature on the topic focuses on compliance with IDEA and loosely coupled theories. However, after careful analysis and extensive research, one could glean that the co-teaching model rests upon the assumptions founded in the productivity, input equals output theory.

This section of the literature review attempted to create a conceptual scaffold for the co-teaching model through the theoretical lens of productivity coupled with structuralist ideals. In the process of creating this theoretical framework, I identified four structural concepts that are tied to the productivity model and analogized them to co-teaching. These four concepts included the division of labor, collaboration, management, and compliance. Since these principles are rooted in the structural frame, it is imperative

that this literature review include classical literature from renowned structuralists Luther H. Gulick and Max Weber. In creating this conceptual framework, it was important to understand that the concept of a frame “is rooted in traditional rational images but goes much deeper to develop versatile and powerful ways to understand social architecture and its consequences” (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p.41). In the effort to navigate through the literature, the seminal works of Heizer, Yell, and Friend were used as a map.

### **Productivity within Organizations**

In order to thoroughly examine the foundation of co-teaching, one must first understand the concept of productivity. Productivity is the ratio of outputs divided by the input resources, such as labor and capital. Outputs are essentially goods and services, which can range from diverse items such as improved judicial systems to education. With regard to education and co-teaching, the input would be two teachers and the output would be improved educational opportunities for students with disabilities (Heizer & Render, 2003; O’Neil et al., 1994). An examination of literature related to this topic leads one to believe that this is the rationale behind using the service delivery model of co-teaching. However, this conceptual framework is flawed. Heizer and Render (2003) stated that “Production is the making of goods and services. High production may imply only that more people are working and that employment levels are high, but does not imply high productivity” (p.13). Heizer and Render (2003) continue by stating that “The more intellectual and personal the task, the more difficult it is to achieve increases in productivity” (p.18). Nevertheless, even with critics fighting the idea of productivity models being used in schools, there is a growing constituency that believes that it has some value. The best example of productivity (input equals output) being applied to co-

teaching comes from a concept coined by Dr. Marilyn Friend and reinforced by the U.S. Office of Special Education called the “Power of Two.”

The Power of Two is a simple concept that suggests that two sets of hands are better than one (Cook & Friend, 1995; Friend, 2007). Throughout the literature there are a number of articles that discuss the benefits of having two instructors in a classroom. Most of the data presented focuses on how this approach enhances the delivery of instruction. As stated previously, Kloo and Zigmond (2008) wrote that theoretically, co-teaching draws on the strengths of both the general educator, who understands the content of the general education curriculum, and the special educator, who identifies unique learning needs of students. In a similar vein, Luckner (1999) examined two elementary classrooms that used a co-teaching approach to provide services to students who were deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing. His primary methods of data collection were observations and interviews that lead to inductive analysis. His results identified some of the benefits of co-teaching. Luckner (1999) stated that co-teaching “provides another set of hands and eyes, lowers the teacher-student ratio and expands the amount of professional expertise that can be directed to student needs” (p.27). Furthermore, Luckner (1999) suggested that co-teaching gives teachers a sense of shared responsibility and collegial support from someone who shares the same triumphs and failures.

Scruggs et al. (2007) meta-synthesis highlighted some of the benefits of co-teaching as well, through the literature of various researchers. Scruggs et al. (2007) noted that students in co-taught classes cooperated more with their peers and in some cases felt a sense of pride to be out of the self contained classroom.

Morocco and Aguilar (2002) identified the benefits of the co-teaching model with regard to understanding content. In their study, they examined school-wide co-teaching models in an urban middle school using (90 min) interviews with key school agents. The analysis of their data reflected a grounded theory approach. In one of their vignettes, they described a special education teacher assisting an entire class throughout a science lesson. Morocco and Aguilar (2002) stated:

The class became a “duo-lecture” as the science teacher talked about the slides and then the special education teacher asked students questions and explained ideas related to plate tectonics theory. Her questions prompted students to use their background knowledge and experience to build understanding. Several characteristics of the co-teaching partnership in this class helped students actively grapple with difficult concepts. (p.341)

All of the above benefits provide an interesting rationale for applying the productivity model to co-teaching, however in order to provide breadth to this already anemic theoretical base one must begin to peel back the layers and explore neighboring theories connected to productivity such as the division of labor.

### **Synthesis**

Currently within the realm of special education, there is no solid conceptual framework for the existence of co-teaching. All of the literature states that co-teaching is a service delivery option created to meet the demands of the inclusion movement. Within the co-teaching model there is a huge emphasis on the input equals output mentality. These ideals suggest that by putting two people in a room one will gain a better result with regard to student achievement; this theory base is flawed. Input/output or production

function theory is generally used when there are tangible measureable outcomes. A number of educators would agree that many of the variables that are present within the field of education are complex, thereby making them difficult to quantify. People are not components of a machine that can be moved around to increase productivity. This is known to be true via the teachings of Argyris and Schon (1978), who suggested that employees in organizations must be treated fairly and employers must respect workers intelligence.

### **Division of Labor**

According to Hiezer and Render (2003) “the importance of job design as a management variable is credited to the eighteenth-century economist Adam Smith. Smith suggested that a division of labor, also known as labor specialization would assist in reducing labor cost...” (p.372). The division of labor is a structuralist concept that falls under the umbrella of productivity. Hiezer and Render (2003) continued by suggesting that labor specialization allows the “development of dexterity and faster learning by the employee because of repetition” (p.372). Furthermore, it fosters an efficient use of time “because employees would not be changing jobs or tools” (p.372).

The idea of the division of labor is seen throughout many of the structural theories used to justify the co-teaching model. According to Rice and Zigmond (1999), co-teaching involves “teaching procedures in which two or more educators possessing distinct sets of skills work in a co-active and coordinated fashion” (p.4). Rice and Zigmond (1999) continued by suggesting that this allows both the general and special educators to pool their expertise to meet the needs of all students in the general education classroom. Rice and Zigmond (1999) conducted a comparative study using semi-

structured interviews to explore the roles and responsibilities of general and special educators in co-taught classes. Their results help to validate the idea of division of labor that is embedded into the co-teaching model. In one of their interviews, Rice and Zigmond (1999) discussed the allocation of work based on certification and ability. They stated that “The subject teacher taught the whole class in the orientation phase of the lesson. In the enhancement phase, the class was grouped by ability and the special education teacher led the smaller group which included several students with learning disabilities while the English subject teacher led the rest of the class” (p.20). This is a prime example of equitable division of labor, in which partners take turns servicing students.

Weiss and Lloyd (2002) highlighted the concept of equitable division of labor in their case study of the roles between special educators and general educators. In their study, they interviewed several special educators and general educators in an effort to better understand the congruence between roles and the actions of secondary special educators in co-taught classrooms. They begin their study by mentioning the increased coordination and collaboration that is fostered by the co-teaching model. They then argued that the co-teaching model allows the once isolated special educator to now provide direct instructional support to the general educator in the form of planning and teaching lesson. They later discussed the idea of time on task and reconfiguration as they relate to division of labor. They stated, “Following training in a co-teaching model, teachers increased the amount of time spent mediating instruction and the number of role exchanges within class periods” (p.60). Weiss and Lloyd’s (2002) results suggest that the

roles present in co-taught classrooms are vague in some instances, however, they still allow for the work to be divided between two individuals.

Morocoo and Aguilar (2002) provide another example of division of labor in their school-wide case study of co-teaching models in an urban middle school. As part of their results, they provided a series of vignettes that exemplified the division of labor in co-taught classes. In a section titled “how the special education teachers’ role varies across partners,” Morocoo and Aguilar (2002) stated that

The content teacher took the lead in most activities; the special education teacher intervened, in team teaching style, to prompt students through activities, pose questions, and organize their homework. When she took on a support role, the special education teacher watched closely for opportunities to make an activity more accessible. While circulating and monitoring students’ work during a mathematics activity, she observed that slow computation skills were hampering several students and immediately brought them calculators. (p.336)

Keeping with the theme of division of labor in content specific classes, Magiera, Smith, Zigmond and Gebauer (2005) examined the benefits of co-teaching in secondary mathematics classes. However, it is important to note that Magiera et al. (2005) did not provide a detailed explanation of their sample size, data collection methods, or analysis methods. Therefore, one must be careful in accepting their findings and applying them to a conceptual model. Nevertheless their comments on the subject of co-teaching are still noteworthy and will be used (within the proper context) in this literature review. Magiera et al. (2005) suggested that high schools have a more content specific curriculum than the lower grades. Often, many of the subjects within a high school curriculum are structured

around passing a high stakes test. They go on to state that “secondary mathematics teachers have highly specialized training in mathematics content, with a limited number of courses focused on how to meet the needs of students with disabilities” (p.20). This snippet reinforces the idea of division of labor and specialization because what Magiera et al. (2005) seems to be stating is that there needs to be a professional, trained in modifying student work, present in the classroom. They continued by stating that “special education teachers, on the other hand, have in-depth knowledge of individual student learning but limited knowledge of mathematics. Secondary, special educators are skilled at accommodating the general education curriculum to meet the needs of students with disabilities” (p. 20). The term *job specialization* has often been used interchangeably with the term *role*. Magiera et al. (2005) proposed that the most frequent role assumed by both teachers in co-taught classrooms was “monitor” of independent practice. They also noted that the “special education teacher was assisting students in the classroom as the mathematics teacher maintained the role of primary instructor” (p.20).

### **Synthesis**

A review of the literature pertaining to the division of labor within co-taught classrooms reveals that social scientists like Weiss and Lloyd (2002), Magiera et al. (2005), and Morocoo and Aguilar (2002) suggested that labor specialization is key to the organizational success of co-teaching. Within the arena of education there are a number of areas in which a special certification is required. This might be one of the best practices that exists within this field. Labor specialization ensures that employees know their job and make fewer mistakes.



With regards to co-teaching, the generalist is expected to know the curriculum inside and out. However, in some cases they may be a little weak when it comes to adapting the curriculum to fit the needs of every student. This is where the special education teacher comes in. The special education teacher is the modifications expert; he or she adapts the lesson for children who are struggling, while maintaining the same academic rigor. Together they can form a team with each member focusing on a particular task within a heterogeneous classroom. A number of social scientists and structuralists, like Fredrick Taylor (as cited by Bolman & Deal), would agree with this practice because it promotes the premise of highly qualified employees. Highly qualified employees usually ensure that work will be completed in an efficient manner given the proper training and certifications.

Aside from being a part of efficiency, labor specialization is a psychological component embedded within organizations. Labor specialization within organizations leads to higher motivation and job satisfaction. This is primarily due to the fact that people often take pride in what they do, and they feel like they are an indispensable member of the organization. Heizer and Render (2003) called this idea job significance. Heizer and Render (2003) stated that job significance is “providing a sense that the job has impact on the organization and society” (p.374).

Gulick and Urwick (1969) reinforced the idea of division of labor and specialization in their *Papers on the Science of Administration*. Gulick and Urwick (1969) named three vital factors that necessitate the division of work, human nature, time, and space. In order to have an effective production at the place of work, individuals must be divided based on special skills.

### **Collaboration within Co-Teaching**

A number of organizations have adopted the concept of teams to foster mutual trust and commitment, in addition to providing the core job characteristics (Heizer & Render, 2003). One team concept that undergirds co-teaching is the self-directed team. Heizer and Render (2003) stated that a self-directed team is “a group of empowered individuals working together to reach a common goal. These teams may be organized for long term or short term objectives” (p.375). Heizer and Render (2003) also recommended that the members within a team must effectively communicate and collaborate with each other: this in essence will help to define roles and in certain cases increase productivity. However, researchers should be cautioned that this literature review is not suggesting that the above comment supports a causal relationship.

Stainback (1989) discussed the concept of professional collaboration in his narrative on the emerging roles for special educators. He suggested that professional peer collaboration is a process that involved teachers and other members of the educational community supporting each other. He continued by stating that “It involves a process that expedites two or three teachers with similar interests and concerns interacting and exchanging ideas, concerning classroom interventions and solutions to specific instructional problems in mainstream settings” (pp. 149-150). This is accomplished by making available an external agent to offer direction, support, and constructive feedback to the instructors. “Data on peer collaboration has indicated that there has been a positive, beneficial impact on classroom teachers’ attitudes toward mainstreaming” (Stainback,1989, pp. 149-150).

Continuing with this thought, a great deal of the literature on teacher collaboration within co-taught classrooms is positive. According to the literature, teachers who participated in co-taught classrooms enjoyed and appreciated the enhancement of the curriculum through collaboration. A recent study conducted by DeSimone and Parmar (2006) helps to reinforce this idea. In their descriptive case study they examined the beliefs and self perceived knowledge of mathematic teachers, with respect to the teaching of students with disabilities. Their two primary methods of data collection were interviews and surveys, which yielded a wealth of information regarding teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. One noteworthy issue that they raise in their results is the notion of teacher collaboration. According to their interviews, the data suggested that teachers welcomed the notion of collaborating with their peers. They stated that the "Results indicate that the most valuable resource for general educators who taught mathematics in inclusion programs was other people – mainly the special education teachers" (p.107).

In their results section they not only mention special education teachers, they highlight other professionals that are involved in the collaboration process such as aides, guidance counselors and school psychologists. They discovered that teachers valued any type of input from their colleagues and met often to discuss behavioral and academic needs. DeSimone and Parmar (2006) continued by stating:

Many of the interviewed participants indicated that they met weekly or biweekly with the special education expert in their school. Whether it was advice on the ways in which to handle a specific student or simply to gain a deeper understanding of a certain disability, the participants looked to their colleagues

who had special background to provide them with assistance. Some of the general education participants even sought the counsel of other general educators who taught inclusion. Collaborative strategies and a genuine team mentality were the central reasons the general educators were able to endure the challenges....

(pp.107-108)

Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002), listed in their book *Effective Instruction for Special Education*, a number of methods in which collaboration can be achieved within the co-teaching model. They suggested that any situation that required interpersonal relationships necessitates that effective communication exists. In their study, they mentioned the quality of the communication between members of a co-teaching team. They stated that “The quality of the communication skills used can determine whether the interactions are successful. Like effective instructional strategies, effective communication skills can be learned” (p.285). The first step in this process is to become an active listener of all members of the organization. Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002) stated that “an active listener devotes all of his or her present attention to the speaker, rather than allowing distractions to interrupt the conversation” (p.286).

In creating a collaborative work environment, it is important that members learn not to personalize certain work issues. This will ultimately lead to the breakdown of communication; Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002) support this by stating “depersonalization can change the focus of the conversation from negative comments regarding an individual’s personality to positive goal oriented statements...” (p.286). Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002) also suggested that in creating a collaborative

environment it is important to summarize the major points covered during a conversation (p.287).

Keeping with the seminal works of Mastropieri and Scruggs (2002), in 2005, Mastropieri, Scruggs, Graetz, Norland, Gardiz, and McDuffie (2005) constructed a study that examined the idea of collaboration within three different case studies in middle schools. As one reads through their work, there is a sense that their methodology is a bit vague. Conversely, their findings still add to the knowledge dynamic through the topics and questions that are raised.

Each of the case studies yielded a different set of data with regards to collaboration. However, the most comprehensive and detailed set of observational findings comes from case study number one. Case study one presented seven themes that emerged from the topic of collaboration, these themes included:

- a) Outstanding working relationships
- b) Strengths as motivators
- c) Time allocated for co-planning
- d) Appropriate curriculum
- e) Effective instructional skills
- f) Disability specific teaching adaptations
- g) Expertise in the content area

With regards to outstanding working relationships, Mastropieri et al. (2005) highlighted the hidden aspects within certain co-teaching relationships. These aspects can either weaken or strengthen one's relationship, and they range from personality to sense of humor. Mastropieri et al. (2005) stated that when "teams of teachers conversed, they

frequently joked together, appeared genuinely at ease, and seemed to enjoy each other's company" (p.263). From this relationship, they also revealed that teachers in certain situations have a genuine trust amongst each other. They continued by stating that teachers "indicated a genuine trust and respect for their partners, and this appeared to facilitate their working relationship" (p.263).

They then moved on to the issue of motivation. Within their examination of case study one they proposed that co-teachers appeared to serve as motivators for their students. This ultimately resulted from collaboration through co-planning. Mastropieri et al. (2005) stated that "one day we observed the teachers co-planned an activity that required students to build small paddles they would raise for responding to questions" (p.263), this was one method of empowering children that resulted from co-planning.

According to Mastropieri et al. (2005), co-teaching teams made time for co-planning because the school had not allocated time for such an activity. Meetings usually took place before or after school and sometimes during lunch. During these meetings teachers would "discuss the science unit and the roles/responsibilities for each teacher and the students" (p.263). They continued by stating that "because teachers enjoyed one another's company, the lack of scheduled co-planning time did not appear to be a barrier to effective instruction" (p.263).

Through collaboration and co-planning teachers were able to set up hands-on activities. According to Mastropieri et al. (2005), this made the content more concrete for special needs students and lessened the demand for English language learners. They go on to state that "this approach to instruction lends itself very well to co-teaching situations in that, by its very nature, teachers can share more equitably in instruction with

hands-on emphasis” (p.263). This notion also echoes the assumption of equitable division of labor which was mentioned earlier.

The collaboration process fosters effective instructional practices used with disability specific teaching adaptations. According to Mastropieri et al. (2005) the process of collaboration allowed teams to create “specific adaptations that were required for students with disabilities to be successful in upcoming activities...” (p.263). During certain activities “the special education teacher worked with students requiring adaptations, and the general education teacher worked with the remaining students in the class” (p.264).

Toward the end of the results section of case one, Mastropieri et al. (2005) mentioned the expertise factor found within co-teaching relationships, which enhances the collaboration process. They stated, “although the general educator was the science-content expert and the special educator was the adaption expert, both teachers in the fourth grade deferred to one another during instruction” (p.264).

Keeping with this theme, Murawski and Hughes (2009) suggested that collaboration is the interaction between professionals who offer different areas of skills yet share responsibilities and goals. They continued by stating that “it involves the need for parity and for all parties to participate actively” (p.269). Continuing with this thought Mastropieri et al. (2005) proposed that schools already necessitate cooperation in a variety of areas including, “grade-level meetings, departmental meetings, field trip organization, school site councils, consultation between colleagues or specialists, and curriculum planning—the list goes on. Educators are keenly aware of the need to work with others to obtain the best results.” (p.269). In their narrative they discussed the role of

collaboration and co-teaching with relationship to RTI. Murawski and Hughes (2009) defined RTI as response to intervention, which is a relatively new concept that identifies students with learning disabilities. Their work provides an interesting view on the importance of collaboration in co-taught classes. They wrote that collaboration seems to be an ever-present term in education today, but its role cannot be minimized (Friend, 2000; Murawski & Hughes 2009). If the major goal of RTI is to address the needs of all students in the general education classroom by using research-based best practices in a hands-on approach, it would be foolish to envision that individual teachers can accomplish this task alone (p. 270).

Additionally, Murawski and Hughes (2009) proposed that collaboration is not only essential to co-teaching, but it is the lynchpin to effective instruction and the industry of education. They completed this thought by affirming that co-teaching and teamwork present a strong means of accomplishing the objective of RTI. Essentially, it permits teachers and other specialists to interact in controlled ways that allow flexibility of instructional opportunities. “The already-overworked general educator who lacks the training and time needed to provide intensive strategies, collect assessment data, and ensure differentiated instruction and cross-curricular connections is provided another professional with whom he or she can meet the same goals” (Murawski & Hughes, 2009, p.273).

### **Synthesis**

An inspection of the literature pertaining to collaboration suggested that teachers understood that communication is a vital component of the co-teaching model.

Throughout the literature, the word *collaboration* is used frequently when examining the



success of any special education program. In hind sight several of the articles that were used in this review refer to co-teaching as collaborative teaching.

In addition, collaboration allows both teachers to develop appropriate goals and objectives for their students without blatantly identifying the special education students. Furthermore, collaboration helps to quell the problem of turf wars. This section of the literature review did not cover this, but often within co-teaching teams, there is underlining tension about who owns the classroom. In some instances, this battle can erupt and cause a substantial disruption to the school day. By effectively communicating, both teachers are given an opportunity to feel each other out. This teamwork will eventually turn into respect and in some cases admiration.

From the literature, one can also garner that teachers understand that increased collaboration decreased the number of disciplinary problems. By communicating with their co-teaching partners, teachers where able to establish who would be the primary disciplinary in the room or if they would share the role. History and literature has taught social scientists that a house divided cannot stand. This same idea can be applied to the co-teaching model. As noted earlier by Kohler-Evans (2006), co-teaching is a marriage and in order for that marriage to work there needs to be a great deal of collaboration.

### **Management of Co-Teaching Teams**

School administrators who supervise district and building level special education programs serve as advocates for various special education initiatives. The special education supervisor is responsible for coordinating meetings and delivering information to students and their families (Salend, 2007). In addition to these responsibilities, special education supervisors must understand educational law.

According to Salend (2007) administrators must “ensure that all legal guidelines for due process, family involvement, assessment, and confidentiality have been followed” (p.152). All of these components are part of management and leadership, which are both needed in order to promote the productivity philosophy, which is a part of the co-teaching model. However, some social scientists have asked the question. Is there a difference between leadership and management? According to Fullan (2007), there is no real difference between leadership and management, “they overlap and you need both qualities” (p.2). He continued by suggesting that a leader “in short, is someone who can make hard problems simple” (p.3).

The classical works of Maslow (1954), Bolman and Deal (2003) and Argyris and Schon (1978) help to connect the varying ideological concepts of leadership and management. Psychologist Abraham Maslow developed one of the most influential theories about human needs. In his work, Maslow classified human needs into five basic categories (Maslow, 1954). These five categories form a hierarchical structure that mimics a pyramid. Bolman and Deal (2003) summarized these categories into the following list:

1. Physiological (needs for oxygen, water, food, physical health, and comfort)
2. Safety (to be safe from danger, attack, and threat)
3. Belongingness and love (needs for positive and loving relationships with other people)
4. Esteem (needs to feel valued and to value oneself)
5. Self-actualization (needs to develop to one’s fullest, to actualize ones potential) (p.117)

According to Maslow's hierarchy (as cited in Bolman & Deal, 2003), physiological and safety needs are vital, they must be satisfied first if an individual is expected to be successful. Managers are usually individuals that only cater to the basic needs presented by Maslow, such as physiological needs and safety needs. Conversely, leaders tend to move up the pyramid, toward the more complex needs, such as belongingness, esteem and self-actualization (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Maslow, 1954). According to Benson and Dundis (2003), leaders understand that "we seek pleasant working relationships with co-workers, peers, and others in the hierarchy; we seek to find our place in formal and informal work groups" (p.317). The sense of belonging, and self-actualizations are concepts that mirror Herzberg's theory of motivation.

During the 1960's, social scientist Fredrick Herzberg (as cited in Bolman & Deal, 2003), examined the concept of motivation through employee stories. He clustered these stories into two groups, motivators and hygiene factors. The motivator category focused on achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and learning. The hygiene category focused on issues surrounding company policy, such as administration, supervision, and working conditions. It is important to note that motivators are the source of job satisfaction. Smerek and Peterson (2007) stated,

In Herzberg's mind, you could not improve job satisfaction by improving any of the hygiene factors; you could only improve job satisfaction by increasing the motivators. The absence of the motivators would not lead to job dissatisfaction, just not job satisfaction. For example, if an employee did not have recognition or achievement this would not lead to job dissatisfaction, but they were unlikely to be motivated either. (p.231)

Building on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Douglas McGregor (as cited in Pardee, 1990) developed a managerial concept that highlights managers' assumptions about their employees. Bolman and Deal (2003) stated that McGregor added one central idea to Maslow's theory. "Managers' assumptions about people tend to be self-fulfilling prophecies" (p.118). McGregor (as cited in Pardee, 1990) proposed two different types of management styles or practices, Theory X and Theory Y. "Most conventional management practices, in his view have been built on either hard or soft versions of Theory X" (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p.118). Theory X focuses on oppression, high levels of control, threats, avoidance of conflict, and punishment. (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Theory Y incorporates Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Theory Y emphasizes choice, self-direction, employee reward and satisfaction. Theory Y proposes that managers and leaders should ensure that organizational conditions are arranged so that employees can achieve their goals.

If individuals find no satisfaction in their work, management has little choice but to rely on Theory X and external control. Conversely, the more managers align organizational requirements with employee self-interest, the more they can rely on Theory Y's principle of self-direction. (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p.119)

In a similar line of thinking, Chris Argyris (as cited in Bolman & Deal, 2003). "argued that people have basic 'self-actualization trends' akin to the efforts of a plant to reach its biological potential" (p.119). Organizations treat employees like children rather than adults. As a result, employees respond with various forms of resistance (Bokeno, 2002):

- Withdrawal (quitting and absenteeism)

- Psychological withdrawal (indifference and apathetic)
- Restrictive Output (sabotage)
- Transcend to better job (job hunting)
- Formation of Unions
- Pass bad attitude to children

The classical works examined thus far provide a framework for understanding the foundation of leadership and management theories. In addition, the ideas proposed by these four theorists create a theoretical lens for examining co-teaching. The underpinnings of these theories reflect a human resource ideology. The assumptions associated with the human resource concept include: serving human needs, interdependence, and a good fit benefits all parties. Within co-taught classrooms, administrators will either incorporate or exclude the human resource ideology (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

In addition to the classical literature examined thus far, there are a number of contemporary management models that can be applied to co-teaching. One such model comes from the world of marketing and operations management; this model is called total quality management or TQM. Heizer and Render (2003) stated that “total quality management systems are driven by identifying and satisfying customer needs” (p.190). In the case of education, the customers would be the students and parents. After understanding who is to be service, the question then becomes, “What is quality?” Quality is a cumbersome topic with regards to education: there are a number of variables that determine quality including the opinions of students and their parents. Heizer and Render (2003) defined quality in a convoluted yet neat manner. They stated that quality is

the entirety of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.

Heizer and Render (2003) divided the concept of TQM into four distinct parts that include: organizational practices, quality principles, employee fulfillment, and customer satisfaction. The flow of these activities are necessary to achieve TQM, and each component can be analogized to the co-teaching model. Heizer and Render (2003) stated that the term *organizational practice* refers to one's understanding of "what is important and what is to be achieved" (p.191). In the case of co-teaching, the most important factors are student achievement and the mainstreaming of the special education students into the general population. Kloo and Zigmond (2008) supported this assumption by stating that "co-teaching accomplishes multiple objectives. First students with disabilities are taught the general education curriculum by general education content specialists" (p.13). Subsequently, "it provides students with disabilities greater access to that curriculum through the special education teacher who provides help and support" (p.13).

Along those same lines, Thousand, Villa and Nevin (2006) stated that co-teaching can result in "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 services" (p.240). They also stated that there was an overall change in student behavior.

The next component of the TQM model is quality principle, which according to Heizer and Render (2003), refers to "how to do what is important and to be accomplished" (p.191). As stated earlier the primary goal of the inclusionary movement was to integrate individuals with disabilities into the general education population. This is

what is important (Nilholm, 2006). In order to satisfy the demands of this movement, educators turned toward the service delivery model of co-teaching.

Following quality principle is the concept of employee fulfillment. Within the literature there are mixed results on this topic with regard to co-teaching, mainly because there is no definitive description of a special educator's role within the classroom. Historically, it was the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) that has been developing, refining, and promoting professional standards and competencies for teachers of students with special needs. Decade after decade the field has seen revisions and upgrades to the professional competencies. In general, the CEC professional standards include a variety of knowledge and skill sets related to select areas such as leadership, communication, instruction, assessment, and collaboration. The revisions suggested by the CEC represent the evolution of instructional parameters for teaching students with disabilities (Hoover & Patton, 2008). In certain cases this could be viewed as ideological fragmentation.

Bateman (1994) addressed this issue by suggesting that "Special educators are the progeny of both science and compassion, and like all our species we bring diverse values to our profession" (p.510). Bateman advocated that this is the primary reason behind some of the ideological fragmentation of the field. She continued by stating, "It is no wonder, therefore, that we are not all of one mind or cut from the same cloth" (p.510). However, when it comes to job fulfillment, both special educators and general educators have expressed a sense of fulfillment when it comes to collaboration and collegiality (Baker & Zigmond, 1995).

The final component of the TQM model is the customer satisfaction variable. When dealing with education, the customers would be the students and their parents. For

this literature review, this term is used loosely due to its fluctuation in meaning. Customer satisfaction is a difficult aspect to measure when dealing with non-tangible services. In an attempt to summarize customer satisfaction with regard to special education, Cronis and Ellis (2000) constructed a narrative that used historical analysis and observations as the primary research method. Cronis and Ellis (2000) stated that “consumers of special education programs are not satisfied with the slow modest gains achieved through conventional methods” (p.642) in turn causing fragmentation in the field. This fragmentation of ideas has damaged the status of special education and hindered its ability to pursue its agenda (Walker, Forness, Kauffman, Epstein, Gresham, Nelson & Strain 1998).

Total quality management is just one of the many types of managerial styles that can be used to illustrate the structural underpinnings of the co-teaching model. Another perspective on this topic comes from the classical literature of Luther Gulick. Gulick and Urwick (1969) developed an organizational theory called POSDCORB from a collection of notes. POSDCORB is an acronym which stands for

- Planning – working out in a broad outline the things that need to be done and the methods for doing them, to accomplish the purpose set for the enterprise.
- Organizing – the establishment of the formal structure of authority through which work subdivisions are arranged, defined and coordinated for the defined objective.
- Staffing -- the whole personnel function of bringing in and training the staff and maintaining favorable conditions of work.



- Directing – the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instructions and serving as the leader of the enterprise.
- Coordinating – the all-important duty of interrelating the various parts of the work.
- Reporting – keeping those to whom the executive is responsible informed as to what is going on, which thus includes keeping himself and his subordinates informed through records, research and inspections.
- Budgeting – all that goes with budgeting in the form of fiscal planning, accounting and control. (p.13)

The seven components of Gulick and Urwick's (1969) organizational theory are scattered throughout the literature on co-teaching and uphold the ideals of the productivity theory. Planning, according to Gulick and Urwick (1969), is a process of outlining the things that need to be done. For co-teaching, this refers to the co-planning process done between partners. Recently, Gaytan (2010) stated that "Team teaching requires that instructors jointly engage in progressive and extensive planning of all aspects of the course" (p.83).

Thousand et al. (2006) constructed a narrative explaining the documented benefits of collaborative planning. In their work they provided suggestions on the proper methods for collaborating and co-teaching. Their data is gathered from secondary sources, which raises the question of validity. Keeping this criticism in mind, their work provides a compelling perspective on collaborative planning within co-taught classrooms.

According to Thousand et al. (2006) “legal requirements combined with student demographics . . . . point to increased collaborative planning and teaching among school personal attempting to best educate students in compliance with federal mandates” (p.240). They continued by suggesting that the planning process fosters learning amongst colleagues. “Through planning and teaching together, all members of the team have an opportunity to acquire new skills” (p.244).

Organizing, as defined by Gulick and Urwick (1969), refers to the establishment of formal authority and defined jobs. In co-teaching teams, the formal authority is the principal or the special education supervisor. For some education supervisors the idea of observing two teachers in a room is still foreign. Wilson (2005) provides suggestions for administrators in her synthesis of contemporary literature. In her study she outlines what administrators should look for when assessing co-teachers. In her guidelines for providing a fair evaluation, she highlights over 10 indicators that administrators should look for in co-taught classrooms. According to her research the three most important indicators include, the roles of teachers, instructional strategies and the assessment processes. Wilson (2005) also discussed the need for more literature with regard to the supervision of co-teachers. She stated

The practice of delivering special education services to students through *co-teaching*—the pairing of general and special education teachers in general education classes—is becoming increasingly popular in the United States. As this practice increases, so does our understanding of its complexities. Among the issues developing is the dilemma of supervision and observation of co-teachers. Although there is an ever-expanding literature base on the practice of co-teaching

(e.g., Murawski & Swanson, 2001) and the beginnings of a body of outcome or efficacy research (e.g., Gable, Mostert, & Tonelon, 2004), there are virtually no guidelines or research studies addressing supervision of collaborative efforts from either the special or general education vantage point. (p.272)

The ideas presented in Wilson's (2005) guide are also tied to the idea of directing. According Gulick and Urwick (1969) directing is the continuous task of making decisions as a leader. It is not uncommon for administrators to provide teachers with feedback, once they have finished evaluating them. Sometimes that feedback is in the form of orders or suggestions (Heizer & Render, 2003; Thousand et al., 2006; Wilson, 2005).

Gulick and Urwick (1969) mentioned the concept of staffing in their "*Papers on the Science of Administration*." For the field of education this idea refers to the concept of recruitment. Tyler, Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna and Saunders (2004) examined this theme in their study on the cultural and linguistic diversity of the special education workforce. In their study, investigators synthesized research findings on the current demographic of diverse special education teachers. As a result two important themes emerged; recruitment and retention, both of which are essential components to staffing.

Tyler et al. (2004) proposed that the staffing of special education programs rests primarily on systematic data collection and the training of special education teachers. Tyler et al. (2004) stated that "fundamental to any effective personnel recruitment and retention system is the information on which the system rests" (p.35). They continued by stating that "Reliable data collected on strategies and activities for recruitment,

preparation, and training of special education teachers would provide solid empirical evidence for methods that are essential and those that are not” (p.35).

In a similar line of thinking Zascavage, Schrode-Steward, Armstrong, Marrs-Butler, Winterman, Zascavage (2008) constructed a comparative analysis in order to differentiate between students who started as a special education major upon entering college, and those who transferred into special education as a major. Zascavage et al., (2008) distributed surveys to eight colleges throughout the state of Texas: Each survey used a 1-5 scale and respondents rated recruitment determinants. In part of the result section, Zascavage et al., (2008) discussed the idea of recruiting non-traditional students to the field of special education through national special education advocacy groups. They stated that “to recruit non-traditional students, those not entering directly out of high school, recruiters might address parent groups within local chapters of The Autism Society, The Down’s Syndrome Association of America, or the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC)” (p.216).

They later stated that this plan would, in effect, target potential special education candidates over the age of 35 if combined with the two most important influences for attracting new teachers, tuition and scholarship incentives. Both tuition and scholarship incentives have proven to be powerful persuasive factors (Zascavage et al., 2008).

Another element of POSDCORB is coordination; coordination is a common professional identity within the discipline of education. Kassini (2008) constructed a meta-synthesis that examined the affects of professionalism on coordination among service providers from different disciplines such as deaf education and speech language pathology. She also examined the coordination between parents and co-teaching teams.

Her work essentially is a collection of studies that describe varying theories related to coordination. Researchers should err on the side of caution when citing her work.

Throughout her work Kassini (2008) discussed the pros and cons of coordination: In one particular section she identified some of the benefits that are associated with coordination. Many of these benefits echo the theme of productivity coupled with collaboration. Kassini (2008) stated that “coordination enhances the professionalism of service providers in many ways. Through coordination educators and speech-language pathologists, for example, learn to adopt a holistic understanding of the child and they gain knowledge of issues they were not familiar with” (p.311).

Embedded within the theory of POSDCORB is the notion of reporting. This idea is the simplest amongst the seven themes: Reporting as it relates to special education, co-teaching, and education in general refers to the dissemination of data to all relevant constituencies. As stated earlier, when it comes to parents, the special education supervisor is responsible for coordinating meetings and delivering information (Salend, 2007). However, the last concept of Gulick and Urwick’s (1969) POSDCORB theory is a bit more complicated. Budgeting is a provocative issue that is surrounded by passionate opinions. When it comes to co-teaching and special education there are a number of conflicting ideologies that saturate the profession.

Whorton, Siders, Fowler, and Naylor (2000) discussed the idea of cost with respect to learning disabled students in his “*A Two Decade Review of the Number of Students with Disabilities Receiving Federal Monies and the Types of Educational Placements Used.*” Whorton et al. (2000) highlighted the number of students with disabilities receiving special educational services and the type of educational placements

in which such services are provided. One of the key points in this article is the number of students that are being classified. Apparently, more and more districts are classifying students, which in turn raises operating costs. According to Whorton et al. (2000), “In 1975 there were 800,000 public school students (1.8% of the total) classified as learning disabled; today that number is 2.6 million, or 4.3%. It cost \$9 billion a year to educate learning disabled kids” (p.289). This work argues that special education has become a costly failure. It is a waste of money that might otherwise be used to improve education (Whorton et al., 2000).

LaNear and Frattura (2007) also noted the increase in spending and the lack of evidence that supports that increased expenditure confounds educational outcomes. They wrote that “the amount of money being spent in support of special education is staggering” (p.88). During the 1999-2000 school years, the United States and the District of Columbia spent approximately \$50 billion on special education services, resulting in \$8,080 per special education student. “In comparison, in 1998, average instructional expenditures in the general education classroom at the elementary and middle school level were \$3,920 per student. On average special education cost 130% more than general education” (LaNear & Frattura, 2007, p.88).

All of the economic data mentioned thus far focuses on productivity or production-function ideology. In addition to the production-function theory, the financial opinions of LaNear and Frattura, (2007) suggested that equality is more important than equity. Equity is an idea associated with fairness or justice in the provision of education or other benefits and it takes individual circumstances into consideration. Whereas equality usually means sameness in treatment by declaring the fundamental equality of all

persons. Regrettably, human beings are creatures of bias and thus certain inequalities are bound to exist (Espinoza, 2007).

### Synthesis

A review of the literature associated with the management of co-taught classrooms suggests that further research is needed on the supervision of collaborative efforts. In addition, investigators should review classical literature related to the key principles of management and compare them to current practices used in co-taught classes.

Throughout the literature on co-teaching there seems to be a lack of explanatory qualitative data on management. Much of the literature on the supervision of collaborative teams is flawed due to its lack of critical analysis. Antaki, Billig, Edwards, and Potter (2003) highlighted six analytic shortcomings in their "*Discourse analysis means doing analysis: A critique of six analytic shortcomings.*" For the purpose of this literature review there are two concepts that cover the analytical weaknesses within the literature on management: the first being the over reliance on quotation. Under analysis by means of over quotation is often exposed by a low ratio of investigator comments in the results, discussion, and conclusion sections of studies. If the material presented in each sections presents quote after quote with only the occasional sentence or paragraph, then one should suspect that the investigator is being lazy with his or her analysis (Antaki et al., 2003).

Under analysis through over- quotations is likely to occur when the investigator is attempting to piece together the ideas of different participants. This is a flawed practice and researchers should be cautioned to stay away from studies that use this as their

primary means of disseminating results. Antaki et al. (2003) stated that “Two tell-tale signs of under analysis through over quotation would be the small amount of analyst’s writing in proportion to the large amount of quotation, and the tendency of the writing to refer to the quotations rather than analyze them” (p.11).

Another example of under analysis seen throughout the literature is the excessive dependence on summarization. In essence, summarizing facts is not adding anything to the current body of knowledge. Summarization is nothing more than restating what has already been said in a condensed form; summarizing provides no analysis. Antaki et al. (2003) stated that “the analyst in the summary might be drawing attention to certain themes, pointing to some things that the participants said.... However, this pointing out is not analysis” (p.9).

In addition to under analysis, researchers should be acquainted with the work of classical structuralists that undergird the management designs used in the co-teaching model. A good deal of the information presented thus far seems to echo the teachings of Weber (1930) and his organizational philosophy. Weber’s examination of bureaucracy was meant to define the essential features within organizations. Weber (1930) outlined several key characteristics of bureaucracy that appear to mirror the managerial principles stated earlier and reinforce the idea of productivity within the co-teaching model. Some of Weber’s characteristics include specification of jobs, system of supervision, unity of command and training in job requirements. The managerial principles found in the co-teaching model are parallel to those used by structuralists and reflect ideas embedded within the productivity theory (Samier, 2002).



## Compliance

According to Wicks (1998) compliance is a big part of how individuals behave in an organization and how that organization functions. Individuals within an organization (i.e. Education) do have the freedom to make their own choices, however many of those choices are directed by the rules of the organization. Compliance can essentially be thought of as the undertaking of activities or established practices that meet the requirements of an external authority. Therefore, “the compliance of individuals in organizations has been central to the concept of ‘organization’ for a long time” (Wicks, 1998, p.373). Wicks (1998) continued by suggesting that the compliance variable within an organization is the central component that explains the differences between successful and unsuccessful organizations. When referring to compliance in education, one usually means compliance with the law, particularly the special education laws like IDEA. The enforcement of these laws supports co-teaching and the productivity model, which it is anchored to. According to Yell, Katsiyannis, Ryan, McDuffie, Mattocks (2008),

It is important that special education teachers understand and adhere to the procedural safeguards of the IDEA. In fact, if school personnel violate a student’s procedural rights and the violation results in the denial of a FAPE because it (a) impeded the child’s right to FAPE, (b) significantly impeded the parents’ opportunity to participate in the special education process, or (c) caused a deprivation of educational benefits, a hearing officer or court likely would rule against the offending school district (IDEA 2004). However, it is important to understand that a procedurally correct individualized education program (IEP)

process and document will not meet legal standards if the student's educational program does not result in his or her achieving actual educational benefit. (p.46)

In a similar line of thinking, over 20 years ago Weber and Rockoff (1980) examined the level of compliance with federal laws PL 93-380 and PL 94-142 at 60 Ohio schools. Their primary method of collecting data was a questionnaire which assessed the relative adaption stance in implementing PL 93-380 and PL 94-142. Weber and Rockoff (1980) suggested that the government was taking a more active role in the education of special needs students. They stated, "During the past 2 decades we have witnessed a trend of the federal government taking an even more active role initiating policy decisions, with the power to implement these policies most often assigned to the state education agency" (p.243). In addition, Weber and Rockoff (1980) made note of the controversy that can arise from government mandates; also known as forced compliance. Weber and Rockoff (1980) stated that "the degree to which an SEA (State Education Agency) can comply with federal mandates depends on the cooperation of local education agencies" (p.243). They continued by stating "When legislative mandates run counter to the objectives of a local agency....SEA may have to resort to other measures such as court injunction, to secure compliance from the LEA (Local Education Agency)" (p.243).

Weber and Rockoff's (1980) results provide an excellent reference point for understanding the growth of compliance within special education. Further into their research they discussed how administrators approached complying with PL 93-380 and PL 94-142. Weber and Rockoff (1980) discovered that administrators that cared about increasing their compliance with PL 93-380 and PL 94-142 relied mostly on the expertise of their special education faculty to decipher the laws and put them into practice. A

number of administrators were willing to accept input given by special educators as long as that individual was perceived as competent.

In addition, Weber and Rockoff (1980) investigated demographics as they relate to compliance. They stated that the “demographic variable of the total number of school-aged children enrolled in the school district would appear to have direct bearing on policy decisions made at the SEA level” (p.250). They continued by suggesting that the structure for federal assistance with regard to special education is flawed. This is due to the fact that federal assistance in the past failed to encourage smaller rural districts to maximally adapt to the laws. Weber and Rockoff (1980) argued that these results can be applied to a wide array of schools, not just rural schools. According to Weber and Rockoff (1980), “Although this survey was taken in Ohio, these findings have generalizability to other states” (p.250).

More recently, Tate (2000) constructed a narrative that reviewed recent court cases and compliance issues with IDEA. Tate’s (2000) work is a meta-synthesis that extracts meaning from several different court cases. Several of the court cases are straight forward, leaving no room for interpretation, however researchers must be aware of over-summarization. Some of the court cases provided by Tate (2000) lack enough substantial data to create a generalizable meaning. Nevertheless, his work provides a powerful stance on the issue of compliance within special education.

Within his work, Tate (2000) focused on rural schools and compliance issues. He stated that “rural schools do not receive special compliance exemption under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act” (p.1). Tate (2000) proposed that even though some rural schools are smaller, they must still meet the substantive and procedural goals

of the IDEA in order to be in compliance. This, in essence, means that rural schools must implement the goal requirements for each disabled student in the district. Tate (2000) stated that the “purpose of IDEA is to provide federal funding assistance to states in meeting the educational goals of students with disabilities” (p.1). Keeping this in mind, Tate (2000) declared that the “federal funding for special education is not to supplant state funding of the program” (p.3). The primary purpose of special education federal funds is to “supplement state funds for providing special education and related services” (p.3).

In the effort to enforce compliance with IDEA, there are a number of disagreements that can crop up. Through the process of historical analysis, Dagley (1995), examined some of the variables embedded in due process hearings. Due process hearings decide the outcome of an IDEA violation. According to Dagley (1995) “when parents or guardians and the school officials disagree about a proposed identification, evaluation, placement, or FAPE either party may request a due process hearing to seek a resolution” (p.1). Throughout the pendency of the hearing, the “stay put” provision mandates that the student remain in the current placement. Unless the parties exhaust due process hearing measures, a court will usually dismiss a claim violation of the act and require the parties to return to proceedings (Dagley, 1995).

Another dimension of compliance within special education is the individualized education program or IEP. This is where the rationale for most co-taught classrooms is shaped (Cook & Friend, 1995; Friend & Reising, 1993). Drasgow et al. (2001) stated that “The IEP document describes the educational needs of a student, the goals and objectives that direct his or her program, the educational programming and placement” (p.359). In

several cases, in order to accomplish this task there needs to be two instructors. Friend and Bursuck (2008) stated, “classroom teachers generally are involved as team participants in preparing an IEP....” (pp. 59-60).

The IEP document is a key component in the effort to comply with PL 94-142. Drasgow et al. (2001) acknowledged this fact and attempted to create a narrative that described the factors associated with the development of legally correct IEPs. In a section marked legislative and judicial definition of FAPE Drasgow et al. (2001) identified several decisions by the Supreme Court that lead to the development of tests to determine if a district is compliant. According to Drasgow et al. (2001), the *Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley 1982* (hereafter Rowley) forced the Supreme Court to develop a two-part test to be used by other courts in determining if a school system is meeting the requirements of FAPE. One of the major components of this test is the development of the IEP. Keeping with this thought, Drasgow et al. (2001) stated:

To determine whether a school had complied with the mandates of the IDEA, a hearing officer or judge first needed to examine the procedural development of a student’s IEP to determine whether the procedures of the IDEA were followed correctly. Second, the hearing officer or judge needed to examine the content of the IEP to determine whether it allowed the student to make meaningful educational progress. Thus the IEP became a crucial legal document. (p.360)

As stated earlier the birth of the IEP is one of the many rationales for the use of co-teaching as a service delivery model. Aside from the factor of LRE, a student’s IEP can demand that a student be educated in a co-taught classroom. In all cases the IEP will

identify the content areas in which co-teaching should occur. In a similar vein, King-Sears and Bowman-Kruhm (2010) constructed a narrative that reviewed the literature on specialized reading programs for disabled students. King-Sears and Bowman-Kruhm (2010) proposed that IEPs must be implemented carefully. In one of their vignettes she challenge the reader to “Consider a scenario in which an adolescent with learning disabilities receives English instruction from co-teachers, and that student's IEP stipulates that (a) specialized reading instruction occurs in the co-taught English class” (p.34).

According to organizational theorists like Wicks (1998), compliance is a major component of organizational success, and it is a key element of the productivity theory. However, one must consider the ramifications of compliance. Compliance with regard to employee development is often referred to as “forced compliance” and is thought of as a negative characteristic of productivity and structuralism (Beauvois, Bungert & Mariette, 1995). Studies on organizational behavior have shown that when individuals are not given the freedom to disagree, the result is forced compliance. Forced compliance usually leads to dissonance within the organization (Beauvois et al., 1995; Kohler-Evans, 2006). This is illustrated by the co-teaching model, which many argue is a forced marriage (Kohler-Evans, 2006).

Forced compliance has far reaching implications: in some instances, it can affect the organizational commitment of employees (Tung-Chun & Wan-Jung, 2007). Balay (2007) stated that “recent research has suggested that commitment is a process of identification with the goals of an organization’s multiple constituencies. In this approach employees can be differently committed to top management, occupations, supervision, co-workers, and unions” (p.322). He defined organizational commitment as partisan, ones

role relation to the goals and values of an organization. In other words, the normative motivational development that differs from instrumental approaches to the explanation of work behavior (Balay, 2007). Throughout his work, Balay (2007) discussed compliance as it relates to organizational commitment and proposed that the divisions that exist within education are related to “the organizational commitment and conflict management behaviors of teachers in the system” (p. 326).

In order to understand the factors that affect commitment, Balay (2007) constructed a study that examined the different levels of organizational commitment based on a questionnaire of 418 teachers in the Northeastern Anatolia region of Turkey in 2005-2006. The levels that were examined included compliance, identification, and internalization, which are all connected to one’s behavior at work. Balay (2007) proposed that organizational commitment is based on three components: compliance, which is an involvement to obtain specific extrinsic rewards; identification, which depends on a desire for affiliation; and internalization, which reflects the congruence between individual and organizational values. Balay’s, (2007) study highlighted two types of organizational commitment that exist within the literature, instrumental/exchange and psychological commitments. According to Balay (2007), instrumental/ exchange commitment refers to the practical gain from the employment relationship: the organization provides incentives to the employee in return for contributions from the employee. Psychological commitment is characterized as non-instrumental, emotional attraction to the organization by the employee. Balay (2007) stated, “Here, commitment refers to the identification with the company goals and values and even internalization of these values” (p.322).

Balay's (2007) study adds a rich source of data to the knowledge dynamic through his nexus of ideas related to the phenomenon of compliance and organizational commitment. In part of his results section he highlights the issue of organizational commitment as it relates to gender. Balay (2007) stated that the "results pointed out that male teachers are more likely to experience commitment based on compliance than female teachers" (p.331). This idea is in sharp contrast to the current body of literature. For instance, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) proposed that women would become more committed within an organization because of the obstacles they had to overcome to gain membership. Balay (2007) also noted in his study that male teachers are more likely to avoid conflicts than their female colleagues in their conflict resolution. Keeping this in mind, researchers must be aware that these results are not generalizable to all organizations. Balay (2007) concluded part of his study by suggesting that

The higher observed score of men in commitment based on compliance and avoiding conflict management than women are meaningful results. As we have noted previously, compliance which is an instrumental-calculative form of commitment, depends on an involvement to obtain specific extrinsic rewards.

According to the instrumental viewpoint, people are primarily concerned with the more material tangible resources received from the relationship. Thus, those who experience commitment based on compliance remain in their organization not because they want to or they ought to, but because they need to do so. (p.331)

In a similar study, Hulpia, Devos, and VanKeer (2009) examined the affect of distributed leadership (working in leadership teams) on teachers' organizational commitment by surveying teachers in 46 secondary schools in Flanders, Belgium. Hulpia



et al. (2009) stated that “In past years numerous studies have indicated that teacher commitment is a critical predictor for teacher’s work performance and the quality of education” (p.40). They continued by suggesting that organizational commitment is the comparative strength of an individual’s identification with and participation in a particular organization. This type of commitment is characterized by three essential components: belief in organizational goals, an enthusiasm to put forth effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to uphold membership. To put it simply, these three components are identification, involvement, and loyalty.

The work of Hulpia et al. (2009) helps to tie some of the themes together related to productivity and co-teaching. Their work examined the relationship between leadership and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is understood to be a part of compliance; moreover compliance is an essential part of the productivity theory used to validate the co-teaching model. Furthermore, distributed leadership is part of the management element of the productivity theory. All of these ideas begin to overlap and create a thematic web of interrelated thoughts.

Hulpia et al. (2009) stated that distributed leadership is a “hot item in the educational management literature” (p.46). However, there is not enough quantitative or qualitative explanatory literature on the topic with relationship to organizational commitment and compliance. The results of the Hulpia et al. (2009) study revealed mixed results, which can be confusing and cumbersome to analyze. Researchers should be aware that the language used throughout their results and discussion sections leads one to believe that their study provides no concrete implications. Hulpia et al. (2009) stated that

We found no significant impact for the amount of supervision, in contrast with Somech (2005). This result implies that the amount to which teachers feel supported by their leadership team is more important for their organizational commitment, compared with the amount to which teachers feel supervised by the leadership team. Teachers' perceptions concerning the amount to which the leadership team supervised and monitors the teachers had no effect on their organizational commitment. Concerning the distribution of leadership functions, the present study revealed that the formal distribution of supportive leadership among the leadership team had a positive significant impact on teachers' commitment to the school (p.46).

### **Synthesis**

A review of the literature reveals that compliance is an essential factor of the co-teaching model. Compliance essentially is the agreement of an employee to perform a specific task as directed by his or her superiors. Compliance can be of one's own free will or it can be forced. From the available literature, one could gather that forced compliance can affect an employee's commitment to the organization. According to the literature presented, forced compliance contributes to the melancholy attitudes of employees.

Co-teaching is a perfect example of forced compliance because two professionals are forced to teach and plan together. Throughout the literature there is no mention of administrators giving teachers free will to choose their partners based on the variables of skill, mentorship, and personality. Personality and educational philosophy are two big factors that are not examined within the current body of literature. These two factors

should be looked at in more detail if investigators intend to get to the heart of the issues surrounding co-teaching.

Removing a person's sense of autonomy will eventually lead to covert forms of rebellion. Chris Argyris, who is known as the father of organizational learning, promoted this concept. Argyris (1978) argued that when the system pushes, the employee will find some way to push back. He condensed this resistance into six manifestations. The first being withdrawal: when employees feel as though they have no value or importance in a company they begin to accrue a number of absences. The second type of behavior is exhibited through psychological withdrawal or apathy. Too often employee's spirits are broken, but they are obligated to stay because of financial burdens. This usually causes the employee to transform into a mindless zombie. The majority of scholars would agree that the third type of behavior is the most dangerous: This behavior presents itself in the form of sabotage. Employees resist by slowing down production of products and damaging equipment and data (Anderson, 1997; Bokeno, 2002).

The fourth type of behavior involves the employee searching for a better job. The only problem with this action is that there are hardly ever enough superior jobs around to accommodate everyone's need. The fifth type of behavior is the development of unions. Unions usually develop when a group of workers get together to try to balance the scales of power in an organization. This usually causes tension between the management and the employees, making matters even worse. The last type of behavior nearly everyone would say is the most heartbreaking. This last behavior is exhibited in the abandonment of the concept of work ethic (Anderson, 1997; Bokeno, 2002).

Additionally the literature on forced compliance fails to provide a convincing argument for its existence within education. Logically, the concept makes a great deal of sense; if employees did not have to conform to the mandated rules and regulations of an organization there would be utter chaos. Forced compliance ensures that everyone is following a strict code of conduct that governs the organization.

### **Summary of Theoretical Framework**

The current body of literature within the field of special education reveals a great deal of fragmentation with regard to the theoretical framework of co-teaching. This is not to say that there is no theoretical framework for inclusion as a practice. There is a wealth of literature on the conceptual framework of inclusion and why educators should support inclusive practices. However, the literature on co-teaching only states that it is a service delivery model used to meet the ever-growing demands of the inclusionary movement. In some ways, it seems as though co-teaching appeared out of thin air, with no architect or author to anchor it. In a number of studies presented in this literature review, investigators found that educators used co-teaching because it was the most practical and productive method of complying with special education laws. This is why one could argue that the theoretical framework of co-teaching rests upon the assumptions of the productivity theory, all of which come from the world of business and operations management. This theory is grounded in the idea that a given amount of inputs will yield a desired output.

This literature review has attempted to connect four substantive concepts in order to create a nexus of ideas to encapsulate the productivity model seen in co-taught classrooms. These four concepts included management, division of labor, collaboration,

and compliance. Alone, these concepts have little meaning in the world of co-teaching. However, when connected they form a tapestry of themes and interrelated ideas, which help in uncovering the true nature of the co-teaching model used in schools today.

One of the most important concepts related to the theory of co-teaching is the notion of management. In this literature review, management was examined from the perspective of administration. Management is an essential part of the co-teaching model, since all co-taught classrooms need to be monitored and evaluated in order to measure the collaborative techniques being used. An appraisal of the literature related to this concept reveals very little information on how administrators should evaluate co-teaching teams.

Additionally, many of the managerial strategies used in the business world are ubiquitous in the fields of education. When evaluating co-taught classes administrators and investigators must also examine how the work is being divided. The division of labor is another huge component of the co-teaching model that supports productivity and connects directly to the ideas of collaboration, compliance, and management.

Throughout the literature most of the studies suggested that teachers share classroom responsibilities equally. The equitable division of labor seems to be a lynchpin within the co-teaching model. The division of labor also supports the idea of labor specialization. Labor specialization means that every person in a team has a specific task that he or she is responsible for. This helps to cut down on confusion and helps to increase respect for one's position.

Collaboration is another component that was examined in this literature review and analogized to co-teaching. Collaboration according to the literature is the process of communicating and coordinating roles in order to increase the efficiency of an

organization. As stated earlier in this literature review, collaboration comes naturally to teachers through meetings with the child study team, administration and special service providers (i.e. pediatric neurologist). Collaboration is one of the foundational concepts of co-teaching and is essential to its success.

The last idea that was examined in this literature review was the notion of compliance. Compliance refers to ones obedience and organizational committee. A number of the studies presented in this literature review lead one to believe that co-teaching is a service delivery model that ensures that schools are compliant with the special education laws.

Figure 2 is an original graphic explanation of the theoretical framework of co-teaching as it relates to productivity.

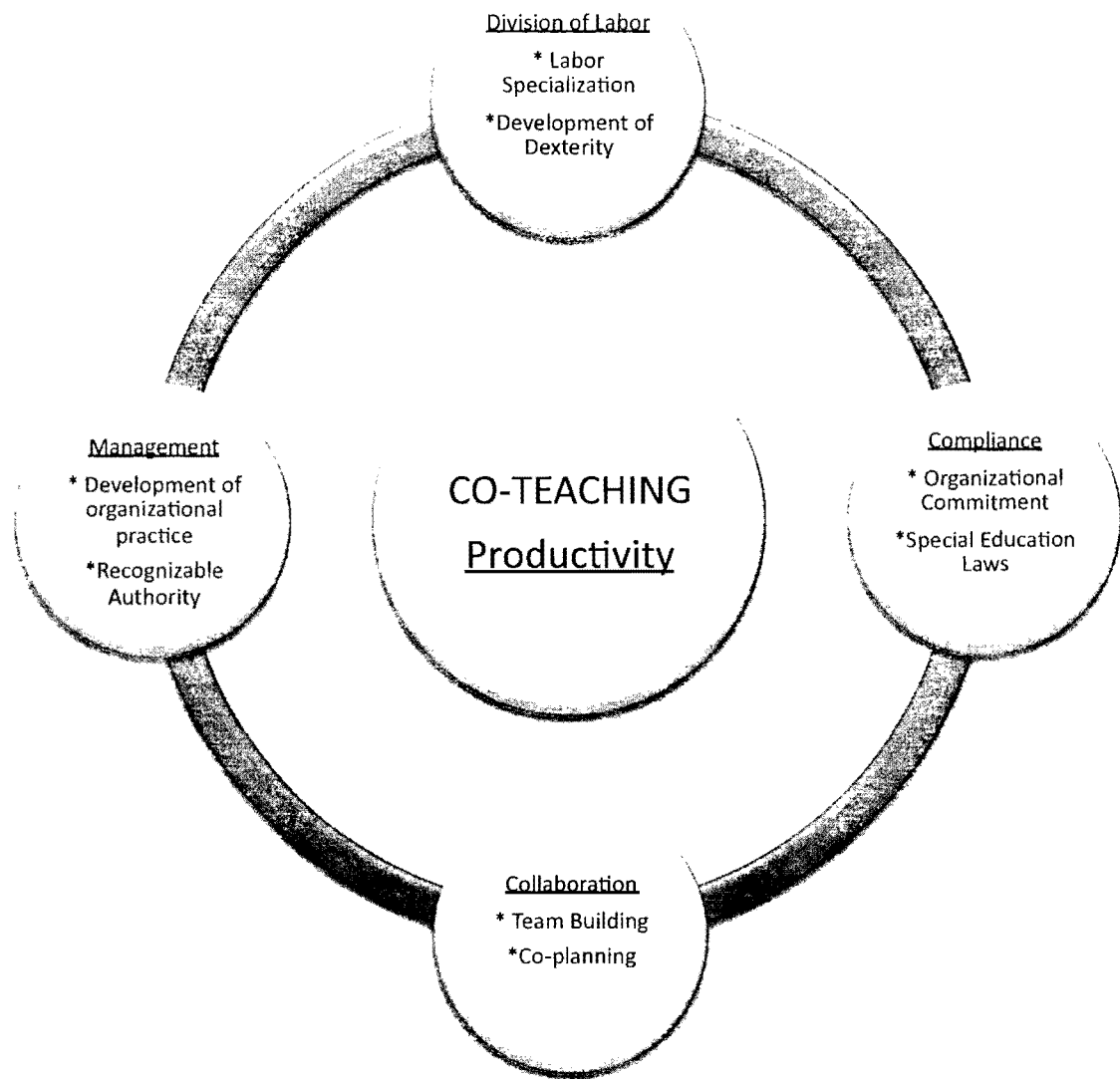


Figure 2. Co-teaching Theoretical Framework

## Chapter III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This included examining their perspectives about the co-teaching model and the kind relationships that are formed between co-teachers. The study primarily focused on middle school teachers, excluding specialists (gym, art, music) and teachers who are not in a co-taught setting.

#### **Researchers Role**

During the time of this study, I was a middle school biology teacher in a culturally diverse urban school district. Six years ago, my principal placed me in a co-taught classroom; I had no idea what to do. At the time, the district did not provide any workshops related to co-teaching. The day I reported to my assignment, an older woman introduced herself and we began to discuss the plan for the year. A rush of tension fell over me, I preferred to work alone. Generally, I thought that two people in a classroom would confuse and frustrate the students. Little did I know that my co-teaching partner and I would become one of the most efficient co-teaching teams in the school.

Over the next few years I listened to other teachers complain about their relationships with their partners. Most of the complaints were about collaboration and understanding each other's roles. I remember one teacher saying to me "look at him



sitting at my desk... these special education teachers should know their place.” In a related instance, I recall a special education teacher saying “maybe if she would let me do something ... anything ... I could modify the lessons so fewer kids would fail.”

During these griping sessions, I would think about why these relationships were not working out. I never offered my advice to my colleagues; however, I did listen to their diagnoses of the problems of co-teaching. One particular teacher told me that many of the disagreements between co-teaching partners stemmed from inappropriate pairing. During a grade level meeting, the same teacher stated, “all my problems would be solved if you would just pair me with a person who were more like me.” Again, I thought that this was an odd thing to say; my co-teaching partner and I are complete polar opposites. For instance, she is an older Caucasian female with children and grandchildren. I am a younger African American male with no children. What I believe makes our relationship strong is our mutual respect for one another and our division of labor. The average day for us begins by arriving to work 30 minutes early. This gives us plenty of time to plan the day’s activities, discuss areas of disagreement, and record grades together. Furthermore, we both have the same size teacher desks that are located in the middle of the classroom. I believe that this sends a message of equality.

In conducting a descriptive qualitative study of this magnitude, I felt that it was important to highlight my own experience and journey through co-teaching. The sharing of my experiences will expose several innate biases. I personally believe that if two people work together, they must see and treat each other as professionals. Many of my colleagues say that my co-teaching experience is unique. I mainly have one co-teacher for the entire day, we both have desks, and we both discuss our roles. The concept of

collaboration is another bias that I must acknowledge. I feel that collaboration between partners is easily accomplished by scheduling time before school or after school. My last bias involves personality. In some instances, teachers believe that personality has a casual affect on role adoption. Personally, I have not accepted that idea into my own worldview.

It is important to recognize these biases and how they have affected my study. Often, “qualitative researchers try to acknowledge and take into account their own biases as a method of dealing with them” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006, p.38). Therefore, I was careful not to allow personal experiences to cloud my interpretation of the data.

Additionally Bogdan and Biklen (2006) wrote that

No matter how much you try, you cannot divorce your research from your past experiences, who you are, what you believe, and what you value. Being a clean slate is neither possible nor desirable. The goal is to become more reflective and conscious of how “who you are” may shape and enrich what you do, not to eliminate it. (p.38)

### **Design and Methods**

The intent of this qualitative research study was to gather data about teacher’s experiences in co-taught classrooms. Qualitative research design and methods generate rich data that reflects the perspectives of the participants. Essentially, qualitative research “is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2008, p.4). Furthermore, qualitative research has a flexible structure of inquiry, which supports the ideals of inductive reasoning, individual meaning, and the importance of rendering complex situations. To better understand the

co-teaching experience from the participants point of view, I interviewed 10 teachers and 3 administrators at a single middle school where co-teaching occurs on all grade levels.

### Site

John H. Brown School is a public middle school, located in an urban neighborhood of great cultural diversity, servicing a student population that speaks more than 23 different languages. The neighborhood and community is receptive to activities within the building; participating in variety of programs such as P.T.A and Parents as Partners. The school services students in pre-k through grade 8, with class size averaging 25 students per homeroom. The total school enrollment is 1254 students, of which 94 are White, 416 are African American, 489 are Hispanic, 187 are Asian/Pacific Islander, and 14 are American Indian/Alaska Native. Within the area of special education, 8.2 % of the students are classified with IEPs (individual education program). None of the students are severely disabled. However, a number of students are classified as E.D. (emotionally disturbed).

The student to teacher ratio is 13:1; however, this does not mean that the actual class sizes are 13. It simply means that there are 13 students in the building for every certified teacher. Typically, the class size fluctuates from month to month with numbers closer to 25. The school has a diverse instructional staff. In total there are 113 instructional staff members (29 males, 84 females): 63 are White, 16 are Black, 28 are Hispanic, and 6 others. There are three administrative staff members (2 male, 1 female): 1 is Black and 2 are White. The school's student population that is classified as economically disadvantaged is 83.4%, with 1001 students receiving free or reduced lunch and breakfast.

Co-teaching takes place on all grade levels at this school, from k-8. According to both the assistant principal and teachers interviewed, the co-teaching dynamic within the building is continuously evolving. Grades k through five are self-contained classrooms where the co-teachers are together for the entire day, and students remain in the same classroom with the teacher for all academic subject areas. The students leave the classroom to receive instruction in art, music, by certified subject area specialists.

Concerning scheduling, participants highlighted the fact that special education teachers' schedules change every year depending on the number of classified students. Special education teachers are expected to teach and modify material for subjects in which they are not formally trained.

All the teachers at John H. Brown had different teaching styles and approaches to co-teaching. Only a few participants stated that this was a problem. The few who did underscore this issue suggesting that the special education teachers had to change their personality and teaching style to fit that of two or three different teachers during the course of a school day. The administration did not acknowledge this as being an issue. Their stance is "figure it out."

The hierarchical structure of the middle school places the special education teacher in a secondary position. This was not a policy, but rather an unwritten practice. During this study, teachers made numerous comments that suggested that the special education teachers at John H. Brown were not equal to their general education counterparts. The hierarchy was structured in the following order from highest to lowest rank: general education teacher, special education teacher, and substitute teacher. As a result, some of the students are confused because they do not know to whom they should

listen. In other words, who is the primary authority in the classroom? The concept of sharing space runs parallel to authority. There were a number of issues concerning the arrangement of furniture. However, even with this dynamic in place, teachers did not report any hostility toward one another.

During the delivery of instruction, teachers understood and defined their roles differently. In some classrooms, the general education teacher handled the instructional matters and the special education teacher took care of the discipline. In other classrooms, both teachers were equally responsible for all aspects of classroom management and instruction.

Several participants' suggested that the dominant co-teaching style at John H. Brown was one teach, one observe or one teach, one assist. In this type of arrangement, the first teacher has the responsibility of management including instruction and discipline. The second teacher systematically checking and observing either small or whole groups. Keeping with this concept, during each of the interviews, administrators were asked to identify which teaching style best described their school. Administrators stated that the ideal situation would be team teaching or parallel teaching. However, one teach one drift seemed to be the most dominant style at John H. Brown.

John H. Brown was selected because it is a typical k-8 school. It has not received recognition for any awards of quality or effectiveness, nor has it been put on any lists of schools that are chronically underperforming or unsafe. Essentially, the results of my study will be useful to administrators and teachers in similar middle schools. From the information provided by the administration and central office, this school is a typical public school within this district and typical of urban k-8 schools in New Jersey

Although I teach in a middle school in the same city, I have no relationship with the staff and the administration of John H. Brown School. I have not worked with any of the teachers at this school; this includes content and grade level committees. As a result, my data will be less impeded by the bias of familiarity.

### **Participants**

In order to gain a cross section of perspectives I purposefully recruited participants. There were 13 participants, six were male and seven were female. The participants consisted of three administrators, four general education teachers, and six special education teachers. Staff members ranged in age from 25-55 years of age. Ethnicities included African American, Hispanic, Indian American, and Caucasian.

Part of understanding the participants is to also understand their journey to become an educator. After I interviewed each participant, I used part of the data to create a profile. The profiles provided a background story, which helped to understand educator's perspectives toward co-teaching. Embedded in the profiles are researcher comments (RC). Researcher comments reflect my thoughts during the interview process and provide a structured method of addressing my biases.

#### **Mr. Smith**

At the time of this study, Mr. Smith had been a special education teacher for 4 years at the John H. Brown School. He is a native of the tri-state area and comes from a long line of educators. His grandmother, mother, aunt, and several cousins are educators as well. However, none of his family members have a special education teaching background. Before he entered the field of education, Mr. Smith attended a local university and majored in business, with a concentration in finance. After he graduated

with a degree in finance, he entered the field of accounting. Mr. Smith did not experience any type of fulfillment in this line of work; he knew that this career choice was a waste of time. Eager to make a difference and give his life meaning, Mr. Smith entered the family business, teaching. He began his career as a substitute teacher in a rough, inner city middle school. The school had numerous fights and student suspensions. His time spent as a substitute was difficult. He struggled daily to create some sort of structure in the classrooms to which he was assigned. After he spent an entire year in chaos, he was paired with an older female teacher who gave him some tips on how to discipline students and how to keep an orderly classroom. Mr. Smith internalized all of his partners' advice and used it the subsequent year, when he accepted a permanent special education position at John H. Brown. During this transition, Mr. Smith was under a great deal of pressure to perform well in his new position, mainly because this was the school his mother had been working at for the past 10 years. Coming from a long line of educators and a strict upbringing, it was expected that Mr. Smith keep an orderly classroom. His mother would often make comments like, "How's it going... that class better be under control."

RC: During my interview with Mr. Smith he never fully explained why he selected special education when all of his family members are general education teachers. I also think that because most of his family members are general education teachers, he approaches being a special education teacher in a different manner. Mr. Smith does not subscribe to the usual stigma that is associated with being a special education teacher; he views his position through the eyes of a general education teacher.

At first glance, one can see that Mr. Smith has a welcoming personality and gets along with all of his colleagues. During an average day, several of his colleagues stop by to talk to him about their weekend. Teachers also ask him for help with various projects.

He always responds with a yes or “well let’s get to it.” In addition to his welcoming personality and strict beliefs about discipline, Mr. Smith maintains a very professional look. On most days, he will be dressed in a pair of slacks, a button down shirt, and a necktie. Some might say this illustrates how he feels about his position in the school.

RC: During my time at JHB I never saw Mr. Smith dress down, even on dress down day. From these actions, I gather that he thinks that special education teachers are just as important (if not more so) as general education teachers.

Lastly, from conversations among teachers, one can gather that Mr. Smith is highly respected by his students. Several teachers at the school stated, “Oh you got a kid acting out in your class, just send him down to Smith he’ll straighten them out.”

### **Ms. Simpson**

At the time of this study, Ms. Simpson had been a special education teacher for 8 years at the John H. Brown School. She is a native of the tri-state area and attended John H. Brown when she was a child. During her time in college, she bounced from major to major until she reflected, “I’m getting to old for this I need to pick something.” Although education was not what she truly wanted to do, she chose it because she could not make up her mind. After she graduated with a degree in education, she decided that she would see where the wind would take her. She put in several applications with different districts. It was not until she got a call from the principal of JHB that she went on her first interview. Originally, she was not going to go, but her friends (who were teachers) dared her to go on the interview. She was hesitant because she unfamiliar with the school. After her interview, the principal offered her a special education position. However, she declined and waited for other schools to call. After a week of no calls, she took the principal up on his offer.



RC: From casual conversations with Ms. Simpson, I gathered that she did not want to be a special education teacher; she took the job because it was the first one available. I believe that this has some effect on the role that she is willing to adopt in the classroom. Her lack of enthusiasm might cause her to view the position of a special education teacher as lower, or not as important, as a general education teacher.

Ms. Simpson worked with numerous teachers during her time at John H. Brown. From her overall demeanor, Ms. Simpson seemed caring and outspoken. Ms. Simpson insinuated that she does not like to be told what to do. Many of her colleagues see her as being sensitive and easily agitated.

All of Ms. Simpson's special education colleagues respect her and value her opinion. The three words that best describe Ms. Simpson are flexible, sensitive, and honest. Her general education colleagues sometimes ignore her even though she is outspoken.

RC: Ms. Simpson seems to be fighting for a spot amongst her peers. Her number one concern is being heard and staking her claim. However, I think that most of her colleagues are not receptive to her.

### **Ms. Samuels**

At the time of this study, Ms. Samuels had been a special education teacher for 6 years at the John H. Brown School. When asked who influenced her to enter the field of education she stated "One of my elementary school teachers." Being an educator was something that Ms. Samuels has always dreamed about. When she enrolled in college she immediately declared her major as education. This was a major step in her life because her family valued college a great deal. Even though she went to school for education, she did not want to work in the field of special education.

During her time in college, Ms. Samuels always viewed special education as a unique job within education. A number of her friends suggested that special education

teachers were not real teachers; they are teachers who cannot get a “general ed gig.” After she graduated, she accepted a position as a permanent building substitute teacher at John H. Brown. She hated this job because she had to travel a great deal and move from classroom to classroom without any notice. After a year of substitute teaching, the principal offered her a position in language arts. The position was available because a senior teacher was scheduled to retire. After Ms. Samuels signed all of the paper work, some how, the teacher who was scheduled to retire did not. The administration’s answer to this dilemma was to make Ms. Samuels a special education teacher. When it came time for the original language arts teacher to retire, Ms. Samuels’s turned down the language arts position. There were two reasons why she made this decision. The first reason was pride, and the second was the fact that she became familiar with all the paper work associated with the special education title.

RC: Even though this mistake happened 5 years ago, Ms. Samuels still carries some bitterness around with her. I believe that this bitterness has the potential to affect her job. Her overall outlook on co-teaching is skewed due to her mistrust of the administration. This may cause her to form unhealthy bonds with her co-teaching partners.

During her time at John H. Brown, Ms. Samuels worked with three teachers. (All of which were middle school teachers.) These were the first three teachers that she worked with, and all of them treated her as if she was not there. Most of the time, Ms. Samuels complained about being ignored and treated like a student. Keeping with this thought, most of her colleagues would argue that she is treated like a student because she acts like a student. Ms. Samuels is liked by all of her colleagues, but not respected. When teachers make plans for the weekend she is the first to be invited, however when it comes

to putting together a project, she is always the last to be asked for input. Some of her partners believe that she is better at organizing than instructing.

RC: The way Ms. Samuels sees herself and the way her peers view her does not match. Her colleagues believe that she is excellent at getting things organized, but not at taking charge of a classroom. Perhaps, she is not good at taking charge because she is never given the chance to do so. Ms. Samuels believes that she is capable of taking control of a classroom and that her special education background allows her to empathize with the students. Ms. Samuels thinks that she has a different classroom management style than her colleagues, however this does not mean that her style is wrong. These diverging opinions have the potential to put a strain on her current and future co-teaching relationships.

### **Ms. Sanders**

At the time of this study, Ms. Sanders had been a special education teacher for 8 years at the John H. Brown School. Ms. Sanders is the offspring of a general education teacher. Her father was a math teacher for 25 years. Ms. Sanders always knew that she was going to enter the field of education. She knew that it was her destiny to become a teacher. During my time with Ms. Sanders, she did express some regret; she wished that she had been exposed to different professions besides teaching. In some way, she felt as though teaching was her only option because it was the only thing that she knew.

RC: I believe that Ms. Sander's lack of exposure to other professions gives her a unique view on co-teaching. I believe that her view of teaching is skewed because that is all that she knows.

After she graduated from college with a degree in education, she home schooled students for 2 years. She discovered that home schooling was very rewarding. Her favorite part of home schooling was the fact that she was her own boss. She did not have to share space with another teacher. She did not have to share materials with another teacher. Most importantly, she did not have to consult with another teacher on what needs to be taught and how it should be taught. After 2 years of home schooling students, she

applied for a resource room position at John H. Brown. She was hired, and after 4 months of having her own room, they told her that she was becoming an inclusion teacher and she needed to teach with a partner. This idea did not sit well with Ms. Sanders; she had a difficult time adjusting to working with another teacher. At first Ms. Sanders wanted to transfer because she thought the administration was making decisions on a whim.

RC: Ms. Sanders feels that working with a general education teacher will result in a loss of authority. She is still upset with the past administration for ignoring her resources room request.

Following her placement, Ms. Sanders became withdrawn and isolated. She only did what she needed to do to make sure the class ran smoothly. A number of her colleagues depend on her for advice and help with their computers. She is not social with her colleagues: over the past 3 years she has only attended two after school social events. Many of her colleagues use the word quiet to describe Ms. Sanders.

On most days, Ms. Sanders can be seen wearing a pair of sweat pants or cargo pants with a student polo shirt that has the John H. Brown insignia on it.

### **Mr. Shannon**

At the time of this study, Mr. Shannon had been a special education teacher for 9 years at John H. Brown. Mr. Shannon is a native of the tri-state area and attended a local college 10 miles from John H. Brown. When he was in college, Mr. Shannon would pass John H. Brown on his way to class. Mr. Shannon never thought that he would be employed at this school. While in college, Mr. Shannon was unsure of his path, therefore, he did not declare a major immediately. After he graduated, he got a job as a martial arts instructor. During this time, Mr. Shannon was married and expecting a baby. With the idea of a child on the way, Mr. Shannon wanted a steadier job that could provide a

greater income. After he weighed his options, he decided to go through the alternate route program to become a teacher. However, he was still unsure about what branch of education he would enter. Shortly after he enrolled in the alternate route program, Mr. Shannon's son was born. Unfortunately, his son was born with Asperger's syndrome, which is a form of autism. This was when Mr. Shannon decided that he would become a special education teacher. He wanted to help students that suffer from various neurological disorders.

After he completed the alternate route program, Mr. Shannon submitted applications to different schools throughout the city. He eventually was hired at John H. Brown. This was his first and only teaching experience. During his first year he was paired with four different teachers: all of whom taught him how to be a better teacher. However, those same four teachers still attempted to instruct him on basic teacher behavior the next school year. At first this annoyed Mr. Shannon, but he concluded that they did not mean any harm because they were just trying to be helpful. The next school year, these four teachers continued to treat Mr. Shannon as if he was a first year teacher. This started to make Mr. Shannon angry, however, he did not express his feelings to his colleagues, in order to maintain peace. Instead Mr. Shannon became snippy with his peers.

RC: It seems as though Mr. Shannon has a great deal of pent up frustration and he is going to explode one day. I wonder if his colleagues would treat him differently if he were a general education teacher. Mr. Shannon believes that his peers treat him this way because he is a special education teacher.

Mr. Shannon is a valued member of the middle school. In certain classes, teachers will call Mr. Shannon to seek his advice about certain students. Mr. Shannon's overall

demeanor is relaxed and flexible. Although, some of his peers believe that this is a façade. They believe that Mr. Shannon hides a lot of his frustration with his co-teaching partners. Mr. Shannon is also very friendly with his colleagues. In a number of instances, Mr. Shannon is the person who organizes non-school affiliated social events.

### **Ms. Stevens**

At the time of this study, Ms. Stevens had been a special education teacher for 6 years at the John H. Brown School. Before she entered the field of education, she attended a prestigious university outside the tri-state area, where she majored in computer engineering and minored in mathematics. After she graduated, she bounced from job to job in the local K-12 school district. She spent the next few months this way and the constant fluctuation was highly unsettling. Every day presented new challenges: Eventually she began mapping out her future and how she would settle into a permanent position. She decided to enroll in alternate route classes in order to become a licensed teacher.

Following the alternate route program, she put in a job application with the district in which she was familiar. The principal of JHB hired her immediately as a special education teacher. Excitement filled her first year: She knew that she would be a great teacher. She stated, “how hard could teaching really be; children sit and you teach.” The first teacher that she worked with was a 65-year-old woman who was preparing to retire. On most days, Ms. Stevens would be responsible for the entire class, not because her partner trusted her, but because she did not want to do any work. Ms. Stevens thought that this was both good and bad. Good, because no one was bossing her around, and bad because she had no guidance.

After her first year, Ms. Stevens put in several requests to have her own resource room. She even came up with proposals of how it would improve student achievement. All of her ideas fell on deaf ears and her requests were not granted. She eventually gave up and cut all unnecessary communication with the administration.

RC: Again, I wonder if the administration would have listened to her if she were a general education teacher. The building has two empty spaces that could be used as resource rooms. Perhaps her request was denied because she was a novice teacher. It seems like a number of the special education teachers are irritated with the practices of the administration.

From her demeanor, Ms. Stevens seems organized and confident. Each day she wears slacks and a button down shirt. Her colleagues respect her, but do not ask her for help with projects or advice.

### **Ms. Gibbons**

At the time of this study, Ms. Gibbons had been a general education teacher for 13 years. Throughout much of her college career she was undeclared, until one of her family members convinced her to become a pre-law major. After she spent 2 years floundering in this major she switched to education in order to provide herself with some stability. Ms. Gibbons never thought that she would be a teacher. She always thought that it was too hard and nobody listened to what you had to say.

Ms. Gibbons has worked at John H. Brown for 3 years. Before she became a member of the John H. Brown staff, she worked at another middle school in the same district. She left her home school because of discipline. At her original school, fights erupted almost everyday and the students did not listen to the teachers. In addition to student fights, the staff hated each other. Everyday there would be a disagreement in

regards to discipline or planning. Teachers would often blame each other for the problems that existed in the building. In her eyes, the school was falling apart.

During her 5th year she submitted a request to be transferred, but at the time there were no openings. So she waited 5 long years for any building to have an opening. Eventually, John H. Brown had an opening. When she first became a member of the John H. Brown staff she thought that she was in heaven. Her colleagues did not scream at her, the students behaved, and the administration seemed to care about the school.

RC: Ms Gibbons seems to be thankful to work with any teacher who has a reasonable personality. Her experience makes Ms. Gibbons a better partner because she has a positive view toward co-teaching. She is always eager to work with another teacher.

During her first year, Ms. Gibbons worked with two co-teachers. Both of these teachers were compassionate, understanding, and helpful. Unlike the special education teachers at her previous building, these teachers were ready to work. One day Ms. Gibbons had a huge load of papers to grade and progress reports to get done. Her partner at the time stated, "...give me half ... we will get it done together." This was extremely different from her experiences in the past; she never experienced such kindness from a co-teaching partner.

Overall Ms. Gibbon's peers respect her. Concerning projects and meetings, she is always kept in the loop. Whenever she makes a suggestion, her peers consider it. The administration has implemented a number of her ideas. Most of her colleagues also view her as being very friendly.

### **Ms. Gifford**

At the time of this study, Ms. Gifford had been a general education teacher for 29 years. She has worked at the John H. Brown School for the past 11 years. She was a



psychology major in college before she started her career as a teacher. She knew that this degree required a great deal of study and scientific “know how.” She dropped that major and began to take classes in education. She understood that most of her classes in education were a waste of time because they did not go over the practical aspects of teaching, such as how to take attendance, what to say to parents, and how to properly discipline students.

After she graduated with a degree in education, she got a job as a seventh grade teacher in a catholic school. She treasured her time at this job and did not want to leave. She recalls the students behaving, the staff being very helpful, and the absence of special education students. However, her time at this job was short because the public schools were almost paying double that of the private schools. Therefore, she left this job to work in an inner city primary school. The district transferred her to three different schools over the course of 8 years. Finally, she ended up at the John H. Brown School.

RC: During my interview with Ms. Gifford I was somewhat taken back by her comment regarding the absence of special education students. At first I thought she disliked special education students. However, after a few discussions I came to realize that she was not used to special education students and teachers. When she began her career as a teacher she was not exposed to anything related to special education. This lack of exposure has the potential to affect her relationships with her special education co-teaching partners. She is more likely to bicker with her partner about issue unique to students who require special services.

Her transition from private to public was difficult, there was more paper work, the students behaved differently, and this would be her first time teaching students with special needs. From casual conversations with Ms. Gifford, one could see that the special education students were one of her major concerns. However, after a few years, she began to welcome the special education students and volunteered to teach classes with

higher numbers of special education students. She began to look at all the students as “her children” and began to affectionately call all of the students “her little ones.” Ms. Gifford keeps a neat classroom and believes that discipline must be presented in the form of love. Many of her students feel attached to her and look at her as a motherly figure.

From her daily interactions with colleagues, it becomes apparent that Ms. Gifford is highly respected for her knowledge and teaching experience. However, colleagues do not seek her out for advice or assistance with any project. A number of her conversations with her grade level partners are limited to work and do not stray beyond those parameters. Ms. Gifford’s demeanor exudes a quiet sense of strength and control that some teachers might find comforting, whereas others find it intimidating.

RC: When I first met Ms. Gifford, I thought that she was very warm and welcoming. However, she does seem somewhat controlling when it comes to her classroom. Her grade level partners seem to respect her, but avoid asking her for help because they fear that she might take over the entire project. I believe that her controlling nature could cause her to take on the both positions in the classroom (special education and general education teacher); this leaves no room for her partners to adopt a role.

### **Mr. Gates**

At the time of this study, Mr. Gates had been a general education teacher for 7 years at the John H. Brown School. His primary focus in college was basketball before he started his career as a teacher. During college he played basketball in hopes of entering the NBA. During his third year in college he realized that he was not going to make it in the NBA, therefore he began to search for a major. At first, he was unsure about his major and what life had waiting for him. After he explored various classes, he eventually declared education as his major.

Both his family and friends pressured him to become a gym teacher. However, Mr. Gates wanted to take a more academic role in school. After he graduated with a degree in liberal arts, he enrolled in the alternate route program. He later accepted a position as a general education teacher at John H. Brown and immediately he started to make friends. For his first teaching assignment, he worked with an older lady who was a special education teacher; she had been teaching special needs students for 15 years. At first, they did not see eye to eye, but eventually the special education teacher bent to his will.

RC: It seems as though Mr. Gates is very controlling and this might make some of his peers back away. I wonder if he would maintain this dominant personality if he were a special education teacher or if he was working with another male teacher?

Most of Mr. Gates colleagues described him as being friendly and helpful. Some said that he is too helpful. Teachers shy away from his help due to the fact that he does not allow others to have a great deal of input. From his overall attitude, Mr. Gates seems like a dependable teacher always willing to help.

RC: Sometimes help can be misconstrued as being over-bearing. It seems like Mr. Gates is helping teachers who do not want his help. Mr. Gates actions left me confused because I am not sure if he is eager to help his colleagues or eager to be in a controlling position.

### **Mr. Gallons**

At the time of this study, Mr. Gallons had been a general education teacher for 14 years. He comes from a large family of teachers. His family represents teachers from both special education and general education. Mr. Gallons always knew that he was going to enter the field of education.

RC: During many of my conversations with Mr. Gallons he was very guarded and calculated with his answers to questions. I am not sure why he behaved this way.

Throughout the beginning of his career, Mr. Gallons was bounced around from school to school before settling at John H. Brown. Most of Mr. Gallons co-teaching partners describe him as cold and unfriendly. Many of them only speak to him during work hours. However, a number of teachers depend on Mr. Gallons for pertinent paper work and student discipline. Teachers make comments like, “I don’t know what we would do if you weren’t here.” All of Mr. Gallons co-teaching partners have neutral opinions towards him.

### **Ms. Andrews**

At the time of this study, Ms. Andrews was a district level supervisor with 15 years of practice in the field of education. Her inspiration for entering the field of education was her fourth grade teacher. Being a gifted student, she was always ahead of the class. Her fourth grade teacher would motivate her everyday telling her, “You will do great things one day.” When she entered college she immediately declared education as her major. However, even with her determination and clear path, she was unsure about her decision to become a teacher. She wanted to make a greater impact on her students. Keeping this in mind she began to study special education in college. This would be her method of truly making a difference.

After she graduated with a degree in special education, she moved from school to school in the tri-state area. She recalled most of her experiences as a special education teacher being positive concerning her colleagues. A number of the teachers she worked with were both welcoming and warm. However, this was not true about the administration. Most of the administrators she came across did not value special education or what special education teachers had to offer. A number of the teachers that

she worked with encouraged her to move up the ranks in order to make a difference in the field of education. She knew that in order to do this she would need to go back to school.

Following her colleagues advice, she went back to school to earn a Masters in Administration and Supervision. After completing this degree, her passion for special education landed her a job as a district level supervisor. Most of her colleagues and subordinates recognize that she is a caring and compassionate person, but they also know that she is a “no excuses” kind of person. Many of the special education teachers have stated that her support visits are not helpful because she expects people to make “miracles” happen. One excuse that she is not fond of is the special education teachers saying that it is difficult when you have to teach four subjects in the middle school. She believes that the special education teachers should be proud of their craft and just “make it work,” no matter what the problem.

RC: Ms. Andrews uses the phrase “my special education teachers” a great deal when she is speaking to other educators. She seems proud of her position and where she has come from, but she seems to flaunt her story like a badge of honor. Some special education teachers seemed put off by this. Many of them felt as though she was too hard on them and when they complained she would answer them by telling her story. I think that from her experience she does know what is going on in co-taught classes; however, she does not empathize with the teachers.

Unlike her colleagues who dress in business suits, she dresses corporate casual. She usually wears a pair of khakis, a button down polo, and loafers. Often teachers and administrators will catch her on the floor in a kindergarten classroom reading to students or in an art room helping students paint.

### **Mr. Adkins**

At the time of this study, Mr. Adkins was the principal of the John H. Brown with 8 years experience in administration and 5 years of experience in teaching; totaling 13

years in the field of education. Throughout college, Mr. Adkins was a criminal justice major. After being pressured from his friends to take an education class, he changed his major to education. After graduating with a degree in education, Mr. Adkins bounced around from high school to high school, coaching various sports teams and helping teachers with classroom issues.

RC: Mr. Adkins thinks that co-taught classrooms in a middle school should be more structured. Both teachers should know their role in order to get the most out of both instructors.

During his time in the classroom, Mr. Adkins spent many of his days encouraging his peers to fight for academic freedom and not just teach what is in the curriculum. He did not enjoy working with another teacher because he always viewed his partners as being lazy. This usually resulted in some type of tension in the co-taught classes to which he was assigned to.

Mr. Adkins was encouraged to become an administrator by both his peers and supervisors. After a few years in the classroom, Mr. Adkins decided to go back to school in order to earn a Masters in Administration and Supervision. After he graduated, he served as a coordinator for summer school for a year, then was promoted to assistant principal of a large middle school. After 2 years, his superiors promoted him to principal of John H. Brown.

His take-charge attitude is the primary reason for his quick rise. Mr. Adkins believes that if there is a wall in front of you, you need to figure out a way over it, around it, under it, or through it. Many of the teachers that work for him describe him as being friendly and stern. Each morning he walks the entire building to ensure that the teachers are on task and the students are behaving. On most days, Mr. Adkins wears a suit,

however he usually has his jacket off and his sleeves rolled up. This presents a hands-on image to the staff.

In addition to being a hands-on person, Mr. Adkins believes that he is a good listener. He has an open door policy with all of his teachers. During the day they may ask him any question. The only catch is, he does not listen to complaining. If the problem is something that the teachers can fix on their own, then he gets frustrated with them and often makes comments like, "You better fix this before I have to intervene.... your not gonna like my answer."

RC: To me this sounds like that old statement that teachers say to their students "No question is a stupid question." Yet the teacher gets irritated when the student asks a silly question. Mr. Adkins open door policy is flawed because most employees need to see their superior about a problem. In some cases, the employee does not know that they can solve the problem themselves.

### **Mr. Adams**

At the time of this study, Mr. Adams was the assistant principal of the John H. Brown School with 15 years of experience in education. Mr. Adams always knew that he could make a difference in the life of a child, therefore, when he began college he declared education as his major. After he graduated, Mr. Adams spent 2 years as a substitute teacher. Each day the substitute coordinator would assigned him to a different school. He hated the traveling and often asked himself why so many teachers were constantly out.

RC: Mr. Adams is very strict on attendance at John H. Brown: teachers are marked late even if they are a minute past the time. He barely makes concessions for bad weather.

Eventually, Mr. Adams accepted a position as a language arts teacher in a small successful middle school. His time spent as a teacher was enjoyable; all of his grade level

partners loved him and everyone was eager to work with him. Understanding that he could not make a difference in the classroom, Mr. Adams went back to school to earn a Master's in Supervision and Administration. After he graduated, Mr. Adams got the position of assistant principal at John H. Brown. Overall, many of the teachers believe that Mr. Adams is approachable and is an easy person to talk to. The only real gripe that many of the teachers have with Mr. Adams is their schedule. Mr. Adams is in charge of making the schedule for most of the teachers. He believes that he tries his best to pair people together that get along. He says that, on average, it does not take him that long to construct the schedule because he knows his teachers

RC: If he is rushing through the scheduling process, how much thought is he really putting into pairing teachers. I've seen some principals take four days to make the schedules for the building. There is a chance that he is not pairing teachers together who have a great deal of chemistry.

Mr. Adams' overall demeanor is positive and uplifting, aside from scheduling his teachers seemed to enjoy his leadership. Table 1 provides a summary of each participant.



Table 1  
Summary of Participant Descriptions

	Participant/Case	Number of Positive (+) Negative (-) Experiences		Characteristics Based on themes that occurred repeatedly in the transcripts	Educational Views	Perspective Toward Co- Teaching
General Education Teachers	Ms. Gibbons 13 <sup>th</sup> year G-Ed	+		In one of her interviews, Ms. Gibbons stated, "I am able to talk and get along with everyone. I try to be <u>friendly</u> "	Collaboration	Favorable
	Ms. Gifford 29 <sup>th</sup> year G-Ed	+	-	In one of her interviews, Ms. Gifford stated, "without <u>discipline</u> , nothing gets done."	Student Discipline	Neutral
	Mr. Gates 7 <sup>th</sup> year G-Ed	+	-	In one of his interviews, Mr. Gates stated, "I try to <u>help out</u> whenever I can."	Helpful Controlling	Neutral
	Mr. Gallons 14 <sup>th</sup> year G-Ed			In one of his interviews, Mr. Gallons stated, "I like to stay to <u>my self</u> ."	Withdrawn	Neutral
Administrators	Mr. Adams 15 <sup>th</sup> year Admin			In one of his interviews, Mr. Adams stated, "I'm lean and mean, people need to come to work <u>on time</u> ."	Promptness	Neutral
	Mr. Adkins 13 <sup>th</sup> year Admin		-	In one of his interviews, Mr. Adkins stated, "I try to be <u>fair</u> with people, but it does always work."	Fairness	Unfavorable
	Ms. Andrews 15 <sup>th</sup> year Admin	+		In one of her interviews, Ms. Andrews stated, "I think with enough work, all co-taught classroom can work, <u>no excuses</u> ."	No excuses	Favorable

Table 1 (continued)

## Summary of Participant Descriptions

	Participant/Case	Number of Positive (+) Negative (-) Experiences		Characteristics Based on themes that occurred repeatedly in the transcripts	Educational Views	Perspective Toward Co- Teaching
Special Education Teachers	Mr. Smith 4 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed	+		In one of his interviews, Mr. Smith stated, "I believe <u>discipline</u> should come first"	Student Discipline	Favorable
	Ms. Simpson 8 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed	+	-	In one of her interviews, Ms. Simpson stated, "I am very <u>passionate</u> about my job."	<u>Having a voice</u> with regards to organization and management	Neutral
	Ms. Samuels 6 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed		- - -	In one of her interviews, Ms Samuels stated, "The room needs to be <u>organized</u> ."	<u>Having a voice</u> with regards to instruction, discipline and organization.	Unfavorable
	Ms. Sanders 8 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed		-	In one of her interviews, Ms. Sanders stated "We are treated less than the general ed teacher, we have no say or <u>control</u> "	Control	Unfavorable
	Mr. Shannon 9 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed	+	- -	In one of his interviews, Mr. Shannon stated, "I do what needs to be done, I'm <u>flexible</u> ."	Flexibility	Unfavorable
	Ms. Stevens 6 <sup>th</sup> year S-Ed	+	-	In one of her interviews, Ms. Stevens stated, "I'm a go with the flow type of person." (Flexible)	Management Flexibility	Neutral

## Data Collection

I gathered information by means of semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews vary in the degree in which they are constructed (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). However, this method provided me with a considerable amount of latitude to pursue a range of topics related to co-teaching, and it offered the participants a chance to shape the topic of co-teaching from their perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

I conducted interviews between 7:15 a.m and 9:15 a.m in the teacher's homeroom. If a participant did not have a homeroom, the teacher's lounge was used. When I interviewed administrators, I used an empty conference room or their office. The duration of each interview ranged between 45-60 minutes. Interview questions were open ended in order to generate rich data.

I purposefully sampled teachers and administrators based on their experiences in order to develop a cross section of multiple perspectives. I addressed the faculty of John H. Brown for a few minutes during one of their regularly scheduled faculty meetings after receiving IRB approval. During the faculty meeting, I provided an overview of my study, based on a solicitation script that I created. I distributed copies of the solicitation script at the meeting for potential participants to review at their leisure. Next, I asked potential participants to contact me after 1 week, via email, to express interest. Fourteen staff members expressed an interest via email, inter-office mail, and verbal communication. Of the 14 participants, only 13 returned the informed consent form, making the total number of participants 13.

Participants' identities were kept completely confidential: only I knew the identity of the participants. The participants were given the option to review the tapes. This

increased the trust factor between the participants and me. Each semi-structured interview consisted of a set of open ended questions created from information found in the literature review and preliminary findings. The open-ended nature of the questions assisted me in gathering rich data from the participants. In addition, the interview questions were designed to extrapolate as much information as possible that related to the research questions. Each interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. NVIVO 9 was the primary tool used to organize the data.

In order to manage data, participants were given last names that began with the first letter of their titles. For example, Ms. Stevens is a special education teacher, Mr. Gates is a general education teacher and Mr. Adkins is an administrator.

### **Interview themes**

The interview questions focused on issues that I saw in the literature and co-taught classrooms. The questions emerged from the following themes.

**Acceptance and Rejection of Teaching Roles.** Teachers who are assigned to co-taught classroom tend to adopt roles within their classes. Sometimes these roles are obvious; teachers who perform certain tasks or take on certain responsibilities. In some instances these roles are covert; teachers who possess an unexplainable presence. Depending on the situation, teachers were either happy or enraged about the role that they espoused in the classroom. During each interview, I attempted to explore what role teachers espoused and their willingness to accept or reject these roles.

**Elements of Co-teaching Relationships.** Understanding co-teaching relationships was a major component of this study. Teachers in co-taught classes form unique associations with their partners. Using this theme as a guide, I structured my

questions to gather information regarding teacher relationships. Probing questions included, what makes a relationship successful? Why are some relationships unhealthy? Is friendship an important factor?

**Administrative Influence.** In the early stages of this study, I did not focus on administrative leadership. However, after revisiting the literature and reflecting on teacher comments during the recruitment process, I decided to place more of an emphasis on administrative influence. A number of teachers during the recruitment process mentioned the lack of support and leadership concerning co-teaching. Acknowledging teachers opinions, some of the interview questions were morphed to extract more information about the influence that the administration has on co-taught classrooms.

**Perspectives toward Collaborative Co-teaching.** Not every co-taught classroom uses a collaborative model. Meaning, not every co-taught classroom has teachers that actively work together with one common goal. Most teachers understand that collaboration is an important part of co-teaching. However, teachers have different ideas about what collaboration is and how it can be achieved.

**Productivity Model as a Justification for Co-teaching.** The chief interview question that evolved from this concept was, Are two teachers really better than one? Teachers and administrators have diverging opinions regarding the productivity of co-teaching. Some educators suggest that it is a waste of resources, whereas others state that it is vital to the success of all classrooms. This is the primary reason that I included this concept in this study. The ongoing debates between teachers and administrators will help to shed light on this issue and a myriad of others.

The interview process was conducted during the months of November, 2010, and December 2010. It was difficult to find secure locations to conduct the interviews. Participants were interviewed between 7:15 a.m and 9:15 a.m in classrooms, conference rooms and empty offices throughout the building. Teacher interviews lasted between 45-60 minutes. For this study, participants were interviewed twice. Participants were allowed to read their first interview to check for meaning (members check), before proceeding to the second interview. All participants were pleased with the offer, but declined to read their first interview.

“In studies that rely predominantly on interviewing, the subject is usually a stranger” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006, p.103). Therefore, I started each interview with small talk in order to create a rapport with the participants. “Topics can range from baseball to cooking. The purpose this chit-chat is to develop a rapport: You search for common ground, for a topic that you have in common, for a place to begin building a relationship” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006, p.103).

The following are examples of five questions that were asked of each interviewee. In addition to these questions, I used probes (follow up questions) as the interview progressed to develop a greater understanding of underlining issues.

#### **Teacher interview questions**

1. How is co-teaching working in your class?
2. What components and practices of your co- teaching team appear to be effective?
3. What difficulties have you encountered working as a co- teaching team?
4. What do you enjoy the most about working as a co- teaching team?

5. How does the workload get divided?

**Administration interview questions**

1. How is co-teaching working in your building?
2. What components and practices do you believe are working between your teachers?
3. What is the number one complaint you receive in your office?
4. How do you pair teachers together?
5. How do you think the workload should be divided between two teachers?

**Analysis**

I analyzed data continuously during the transcription process. I transcribed and coded the data from each interview into themes using a qualitative software package called NVIVO 9. Codes were in the form of themes, models, indicators, and qualifications that are casually related. Themes are typically patterns found in the data, which at the least describe and organize the researcher's observations. Good, carefully constructed, themes typically interpret the phenomenon (Boyatzis, 1998).

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2006),

Developing a coding system involves several steps: You search through your data for regularities and patterns as well as for topics your data covers and then you write down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns. These words and phrases are coding categories. They are a means of sorting descriptive data you have collected so that the material bearing on a given topic can be physically separated from other data. (p.173)

I organized each code (node) into parent codes (primary codes). After which the parent codes were broken down into smaller children codes (sub codes) that revealed underlining assumptions embedded in the interviews.

Codes were inductively generated using a thematic analysis approach and emerged from teachers' descriptions of their experiences in co-taught classes. Before I started coding, I developed a start list similar to the one created by Miles and Hubberman (1994). According to Miles and Hubberman (1994) the list should come from the "conceptual framework, list of research questions, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables that the researcher brings to the study" (p.58). The start list helped to guide my thinking and steer me in the right direction. The following is an example of a few of the items on my start list.

- Role,
- Administration,
- Teacher Relationships,
- Collaboration,
- Personality,
- Co-teaching Model,
- Reflective Narrative,
- Work Station,
- Division of Labor, and
- Challenges in Co-teaching.

After I created a start list, I began to construct a codebook. In my codebook, I created a set of criteria for each code. The criteria used in the codebook included a label,



definition, general description, inclusion and exclusion rules with examples, and any sub-codes that were associated with that code. It is important to note that I used my codebook as an organizational tool and as a gauge to determine what I should include in my study. Not every code from the start list made it into my final codebook. Table 2 outlines the criteria used for one of the codes in my codebook.

Table 2

## Code Book Example

Label	Role
Definition	The position that one adopts within their organization.
General Description	As teachers work together, they take on certain positions. These positions could be formal, meaning that the administration has placed them there. Or informal, meaning that the culture within the organization has placed them there.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- for a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must allude to their role or their partner's role within the school (past or present).  Exclusion- A set of data will be excluded from this code if the participant makes no mention of their position or their partner's position (past or present).
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion – "I just feel like they get the low man on the totem pole. I'm like, "I'm not the low man on the totem pole anymore. Find somebody else."  Exclusion – "Sometimes we get a good mix and every once in a while we have a bad marriage,"
Sub-code	Assistant/Second Class Citizen – Any piece of data that suggests that a teacher is beneath his or her colleagues.  Facilitator – Any piece of data that suggests that a teacher is helping to keep the classroom running smoothly. A class manger.  Instructional Leader – Any piece of data that suggest that a teacher is in the lead position.

As I identified patterns, I constructed narratives using data from participant testimonies. I used the narratives to highlight any relationships, trends and contradictions found in the data. Essentially, the concepts that emerged from the narratives were used to connect ideas found in the literature to the research questions (Maxwell, 2004).

### **Single-Case Analysis**

During the analysis, I treated each participant as a case. The purpose of the single case analysis was to summarize individual participant experiences and understandings. I used a Within Case Display method to summarize each participant; this method created explanatory narratives regarding each participant. These narratives were then used to outline basic patterns and themes (Miles & Hubberman 1994). It was imperative that this process was done before I attempted to construct a conceptual framework from patterns, trends, and paradoxes (Maxwell, 2004).

### **Cross-Case Analysis**

Once I developed a clear understanding of each participant's perspective of co-teaching, I proceeded to the second phase of analysis, which was cross-case analysis. I reread each interview and its codes in order to construct a conceptual framework that displayed the most dominant themes. Each of these dominant themes was "broken into factors and graphically displayed illustrating the relationships between them" (Maxwell, 2004, p.153). Trends and themes were highlighted through the process of cross case analysis and displayed in the form of descriptive narratives. This technique revealed both explanations and descriptions as the themes began to answer the research questions (Maxwell, 2004; Miles & Hubberman 1994).

The purpose of the cross-case analysis was to assemble a sound sequence of evidence and “to construct a theoretically and conceptually coherent theory by checking for rival explanations and looking for negative evidence” (Maxwell, 2004, p.153). Figure 3 is a graphic representation of the analysis process from start to finish for one theme.

### Visual Explanation of the Analysis Process

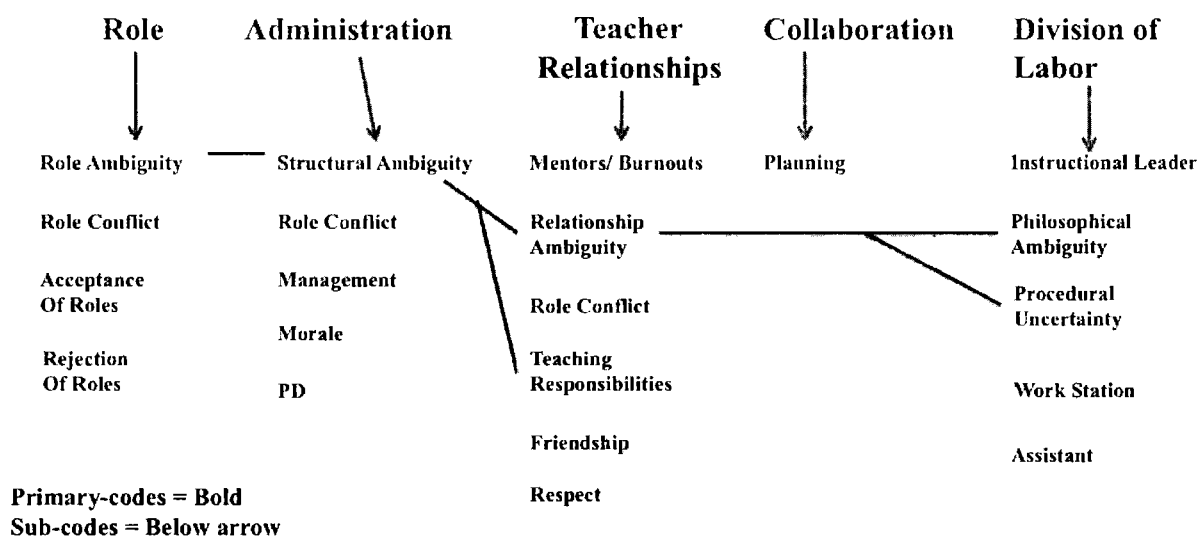


Figure 3: Visual Explanation of the Analysis Process

### Validity Issues

#### Teacher Selection

Did I interview enough teachers? Did I bias the data with the types of teachers that I chose to interview? I purposefully recruited participants in order to get a cross section of perspectives. There were 13 participants, six were male and seven were female. The participants consisted of three administrators, four general education teachers, and six special education teachers. Staff members ranged in age from 25-55 years of age. Ethnicities included African American, Hispanic, Indian American, and Caucasian.

I wanted to seek the opinions of multiple types of teachers, including those that love co-teaching and those that hate it. My sample size was limited to 13 participants; therefore, in order to gain the maximum amount of data from each interview I was meticulous with my questioning and probing techniques. During each interview, I kept detailed notes: If a participant did not answer a particular question the first time I attempted to re-state the question later in the interview.

### **Site Selection**

Did I choose a site that would provide data that could be use in other studies? The site that I chose was a typical k-8 school; There are no characteristics that make this school different from any other school in the district. The school has a general curriculum with all four subjects being taught every day. The school has met AYP and is not considered a failing school; other than that it has not received recognition or any awards. The school day begins at 8:30 a.m and ends at 2:45 a.m. All of these factors reinforce the usefulness of my study to other administrators and teachers who work in similar middle schools.

### **Reliability of Participant Interviews**

How do I know that what the teachers are saying is true and not just obsequious comments about the school and district (i.e. “I don’t want to make the school look bad”)? In order to increase the truthfulness of the teachers’ responses, I assured them that I was not a supervisor or someone who had any power over them. After this, I assured them that none of the information provided would be shared with anyone and that their identity would be kept a secret. The location of the interviews was in their classroom or office in order to make them feel comfortable. Additionally, the time of year may have also

influenced participant's answers. A teacher might feel one way in the fall and a completely different way in the spring. In order to decrease the variability of participant's answers, I conducted all the interviews during the months of November, 2010, and December, 2010.

### **Ethical Issues**

Could my research harm the teachers or administrators? The ethical issues that are embedded in my study are minor, but still worthy of mentioning. The participants in this study risk becoming more aware of co-teaching issues at John H. Brown. Often individuals at work will not express their true feelings unless asked by a third party. Even though the data from the interviews will not be shared with the participants, this does not stop them from discussing their interviews with each other. I could not eliminate this risk for the participants.

## Chapter IV

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This included examining their perspectives about the co-teaching model and the relationships that are formed between co-teachers. The study primarily focused on middle school teachers, excluding specialists (gym, art, music) and teachers who are not in a co-taught setting. Through semi-structured interviews I attempted to explore how teacher's perspectives on co-teaching shaped their world. My use of pseudonyms protects the identity of the participants. By focusing on teacher's views and beliefs, this study ensures that the data reflects the purest understanding of the topic.

In this chapter, I provide a brief description of five influential themes that emerged from the interviews. These themes are: Acceptance and Rejection of Teaching Roles, Elements of Co-teaching Relationships, Administrative Influence, Perspectives toward Collaborative Co-teaching, and The Productivity Model as a Justification for Co-teaching. All five of these themes create an interwoven structural framework for co-teaching, which answers the research questions posed earlier.

## **Acceptance and Rejection of Teaching Roles**

Throughout the interviews, participants discussed what roles they adopted within the classroom. There were two main roles that teachers espoused within the classroom, second-class citizen and team member. Additionally, housed in the category of team member were the positions of facilitator and instructional leader. These two positions are grouped in this fashion because it is possible to be both an instructional leader and a facilitator. According to all the participants, these roles both morphed and evolved as the school year progressed.

### **Who Are the Second-Class Citizens?**

The term second-class citizen is a powerful phrase that invokes a range of emotions. The term is usually defined as being less than or lower than one's counterpart. This term also suggests that there is a hierarchical system that exists within an organization. At the John H. Brown School, staff members are part of an informal hierarchical system. At the top of the system there are the seasoned, general education teachers, who have at least 10 years of classroom experience. Next are the novice general education teachers, who have been teaching for less than 5 years. And at the bottom of the ladder are the special education teachers.

At the John H. Brown School, teachers and administrators understood the position of special education teacher as being less of a teacher. Special education teachers stated that being thought of as an "aid" made them second-class citizen.

My time at the John H. Brown School has revealed a number of factors that help to explain the role of a second-class citizen. Overall, special education teachers suggested that their position was not as important as the general education teacher's position. At

this school, special education teachers are treated unfairly. Many of the decisions that are made with regards to curriculum development, planning, and instruction do not involve special education teachers. Therefore, one can glean that if their input is not valued, they are not valued. On any given day the administration will call a special education teacher to act as a substitute teacher. This is a common practice and creates a great deal of tension between the administration and the teachers. When the administration pulls a special education teacher out of a classroom to act as a substitute teacher; it is an unconscious decision. Conversations with special education teachers revealed that this is their number one issue with being a special education teacher. Many of them have said things like, “That’s why I’m taking the Praxis in math ... to get out of special education,” or “Next year I got to get a new gig ... out of special education.”

The pulling of special education teachers to act as substitute teachers is a common practice at this school. Some of the teachers even went on to say that it is a common practice everywhere in education. When discussing this issue, some of the special education teachers stated that they had friends at other schools, in other districts, who are special education teachers, and they are called to sub as well. So this leads one to believe that this is not a problem that is unique to this school.

Overall the general education teachers agreed with the notion that special education teachers are called to substitute more than they should. The general education teachers at this school insinuated that this practice was unfair to both parties. When the special education teacher is called to substitute, he or she falls behind and does not know what is being taught the next day. A number of good co-teaching teams are strained due to the special education teacher being called to substitute. As a result, the general



education teacher becomes frustrated with their partner and slowly begins excluding the special education teacher from the classroom activities.

The administration at this school presented diverging opinions with regards to this issue. The principal believes that special education teachers are rarely called to substitute, whereas the assistant principal believes that it happens all of the time. Who is right and who is wrong? The data gathered from the John H. Brown School shows that there is a definite disconnect between how the administration understands the role of the special education teachers and how the special education teachers understand their roles.

Special education teachers at John H. Brown are responsible for one set of special education students. Due to the fact that it is a middle school, these students must travel from class to class, following them is the special education teacher. The students at this school see the special education teachers moving from class to class with them and assume that they are not as important as the general education teacher. The students can be seen saying things like, “You’re not a real teacher ... you’re always with us, you must be some type of bootleg teacher.” This is another factor that contributes to the special education teachers being seen as a second-class citizen.

In this type of environment, special education teachers are forced to assert themselves in order to gain some type of respect from the students. The nomadic nature of the special education teachers adds to their role as a second-class citizen. In addition to being nomadic, special education teachers lack a workstation that is equivalent to their general education counterparts. In the realm of education, a workstation is any place where you can place your instructional materials. For most teachers a workstation is a desk. In most of the classrooms both teachers receive a desk to work at. However, the

special education teachers' desks are usually placed off to the side or in the back of the classroom. Special education teachers thought that this practice was a slap in the face, and another example of how they are treated like second-class citizens. By placing the desk in the rear of the room, the general education teacher is unconsciously saying that special education teachers are not as important or valued.

During my time at the John H. Brown school it was also brought to my attention that there was a time in the past when special education teachers did not have a desk in the room. This eventually became a union issue and teachers actually had to write in their contract that there must be two desks in a room, if there are two instructors in that room. This leads me to the question, what if the union never wrote that section into the contract? Would special education teachers be forced to place their materials wherever they found room? One could glean that materials would be placed in an awkward location, possibly with the students' materials.

The morale of the special education teachers at the John H. Brown School is strikingly low. During one of my interviews I was forced to turn off the recorder because the participant began to get emotional. Many of the special education teachers are fed up with how they are being treated and believe that it is just "the nature of the beast"; Meaning, that part of being a special education teacher means accepting a lower role in the hierarchy of the building.

The analytical insights discussed thus far help to identify how special education teachers are seen as second class-citizens. However, in order to give credence to these ideas, they must be supported with raw data from the participants. The subsequent participant responses reflect the insight discussed thus far in this section.

Special education teachers at the John H. Brown School stated that the “traveling” of the special education teacher impacts how the students view them. Traveling with the students creates a different tone and a different level of respect. Students may develop the idea that the special education teacher is on their level. Ms. Samuels supports this idea by stating:

There’s definitely like a couple of kids last year and this year who look at me with less authority because I travel around with them not on a whole but there are those couple of kids that look at me that way.

She continued by stating, “The students sometimes see you as almost like an aid ‘cause they’re like why are you always with us, rather than oh, I’m coming into your classroom.” According to her interview, Ms. Samuels believes that traveling with the students skews their perception of their teachers.

The nomadic nature of the special education teachers at this school is primarily do to the fact that they have no home base and they must service a specific group of students. Traveling from room to room, forces the special education teachers to adjust to four different personalities and settings. Mr. Adams stated,

Perception is that the general ed teacher is the primary, because the general ed teacher is stationary in the homeroom. And the inclusion teacher (special education teacher) moves with the students, either every 45 minutes or every 90 minutes, the inclusion teacher is moving from language arts to mathematics, to science and to social studies. I don't want to say that they're like the student, but they're constantly in transition. And instead of working with just one personality and the students, they're dealing with the specialists in language arts, the

specialists in mathematics, the specialists in social studies, the specialists in science.

Another issue that contributes to the role of second-class citizens is the number of times special education teachers are called to substitute.

With regards to the idea of second-class citizen, the transcripts are littered with the word substitute. Both the general education and the special education teachers use it to describe the position of the special education teachers. Almost all of the special education teachers interviewed (5 out of 6) said that being pulled from their regular assignment puts them on the same level as a substitute and places them in a situation where they may not be familiar with the content area. One special education teacher did not respond to the question. Ms. Sanders explained that

If I'm covering for one of my co-teachers, I may be teaching seventh and eighth grade in a specific subject. I'm no expert in science. I know a lot of social studies, but I'm not an expert in eighth grade social studies. I've never taught it before. I'm not an expert in eighth grade math or language arts because I've never taught it before. And now I'm covering a class. So in essence, you just leveled me with substitute teachers.

Strangely enough, there was one special education teacher who accepted this role, even though she did not agree with it. Ms. Simpson explained in her interview the reason why special education teachers are used as substitutes. She stated that

Well, I know logistics is the reason why they pull us. You know, it's easier to pull us out because we're almost like the teacher in excess in the room. There are

two teachers. I'm the one that pushes in so I would be the one that they would pull.

She later stated that "It does frustrate me a little because then I feel like I'm being used as I don't know what the correct word is but I'm not being used appropriately I guess"

Mr. Shannon argued that this practice is not fair because the general education teachers are not called to substitute. Mr. Shannon stated, "A lot of the time we are sent in to sub for the general ed teacher. You know? So a lot of the special ed teachers are there throughout the day teaching what the regular teacher would do." He concluded by stating that "...you don't see the vice versa of it in regards if the special ed teacher is out, you don't see the regular teacher going in and subbing."

Throughout the interviews, many of the general education teachers agreed with this notion, 7 out of 10. Of the three who did not agree, two were undecided and one stated that everyone is treated equally. Nevertheless, Ms. Gibbons explained, "They were like substitutes. They were not respected as a teacher," she continued by stating, "My co-teacher was pulled when I was out last week. She was pulled to cover my class, which I don't feel is right. Because now she's not servicing the kids that she should be servicing." When asked how she thinks that makes her co-teaching partner feel she said, "Degraded, because they're pulling them to cover like a substitute." Ms. Gifford concluded this thought by stating, "I think it makes them feel like they're not thought of as the professional everyone else is. Because you're (special education teacher) not a sub and you're (special education teacher) not supposed to be just there sort of babysitting."

According to the administration, this practice does not occur very often. Mr. Adkins, who is the principal of the school, suggested that the practice never occurs and

that the administration will use other resources before pulling a special education teacher. He stated, "We'll utilize a teacher's assistant. We'll take a pre-K out, but we'll utilize, like, a teacher's assistant if needed." However, Mr. Adams, who is the assistant principal of the building, had a very different outlook on the situation. He believes that special education teachers are pulled out of the classroom far too much and that this removal from the regular education setting causes their positions to be diminished. When asked about the frequency with which special education teachers are called to substitute, Mr. Adams stated, "More often than I would like. But we have very limited substitutes." He goes on to say, "...you automatically assume the special ed teacher is just the extra teacher." He finishes this thought by stating, "I'm sure they feel like a glorified substitute, even though, again, it contradicts what I said, that they're treated equally and fairly." He goes on to say "...I think they feel like an overused or an abused resource."

In a separate interview, a district level supervisor (Ms. Andrews) was asked the same question regarding special education teachers being used as substitutes, and she stated, "My own home school that I came from, it was quite rampant because the thought was, a special education teacher can replace a general education teacher, but not vice versa." Mr. Adams suggested that pulling special education teachers out of the classroom to substitute causes a lack of stability and creates tension between the two co-teaching partners. He stated:

The general ed sees sometimes maybe a lack of stability since the inclusion teacher is being pulled. Therefore, how do I know you're going to be here tomorrow, so how can I trust you to teach the next lesson? Because tomorrow, you may be covering a gym class, or someone might be absent and there's not

enough substitutes, so instead of doing the eighth grade inclusion you might be third grade general ed.

Keeping with the role of second-class citizen, almost all of the participants referenced the importance of a workstation. A workstation can be thought of as a place where one can place his or her belongings and complete their paper work. This could be a desk, room, or a locker. Approximately half of the participants thought that the lack of a workstation suggested that a person was in an assistant's role, the other half of the participants proposed that a desk was not important to one's role. Mr. Adams stated that every teacher in the building has a place to put his or her instructional materials. He declared, "Each one has a home base for their instructional materials, their personal materials. Each inclusion classroom has two desks in it as far as I know, my nobody's told me otherwise this year, and we moved classrooms around."

Mr. Adkins believes that its not so much the desk themselves, but rather where the desk are placed. He suggested that the placement of a desk implies who is leading the classroom and who is in a more subservient roll. He stated that

In some rooms that I've been at, in the north corner of the room is the inclusion (special education teacher), and the general ed teacher's facing the entire class.

Right away you're just showing me by the set up of the classroom that the general ed teacher's alpha, you know what I mean? You're just in the back.

Mr. Adams supports this notion by stating, "Their (special education teachers) desks are to the side or by the computers, as opposed to the general ed teacher's desk being in the front." He continued by stating, "The general ed teacher thinks, okay, well, this is my homeroom, so my desk should be here (front of the room). Not necessarily,

well, there's two of us in the classroom, so both desks should be here (Front of the room).”

According to Ms. Stevens, it is not just the placement of the desk but the condition of the desk itself. In some instances special education teachers were given desks that were substantially smaller than their general education partner, or they would be given desks that only had one drawer that functioned properly. This forced some teachers to place their belongings on bookshelves and windowsills. Ms. Stevens discussed her experience as a teacher looking for a spot to place her belongings. She stated, “This is the first year that I have had a desk that is the same size as other teachers’ desks. I’ve always had a desk that only had one side with drawers which was frustrating.” During her interview, she insinuated that it is not fair to provide special education teachers with inadequate storage when they receive all of the same materials as the general education teacher. She stated:

I’ve always had to, well, when I did inclusion I had to make a makeshift bookshelf to put all my -- because, you know, I get all the same, if not more textbooks and things on inclusion. But I get all the same language arts stuff, the same math stuff

The placement and condition of the desk does send a message to both students and parents. Ms. Simpson stated:

When there is no desk, I think that the students pick up on that because it shows that you don’t have a place and you are an aid almost. You’re just kind of following them or you’re there for assistance either for one child or to help the teacher rather than be the teacher in the room as well.



Ms. Gibbons mentioned that the lack of a desk violates the teacher's contract in the district. According to the new contract that was signed in this district, all teachers are to have a space to call their own that is provided by the district. Ms. Gibbons, who is a union representative made this clear in one of her interviews. She stated, "In this building, every teacher who does not have their own designated classroom space (must have a desk) – in fact, it's a union issue. In city, every teacher is supposed to be given a desk." She continued by stating, "...they're supposed to have (a desk) they should have a desk, a space to put (their belongings), it's not supposed to be you have no place to put your personal belongings. The contract calls for you to have such a space designated as yours."

Many of the factors discussed thus far point to concrete explanations as to why some special education teachers feel devalued. However, during my time at the John H. Brown School there was one group of individuals that was unable to provide a reasonable explanation for the role of second-class citizen. Many of them just said that they feel devalued. Mr. Shannon stated, "I just feel like they get the low man on the totem pole. I'm like; I'm not the low man on the totem pole anymore." He later stated, "In the upper grades, it's just hard to feel comfortable." Ms. Samuels stated, "I don't know. It's hard to explain. I'll be honest with you, I don't feel appreciated probably as a teacher up on the third floor (middle school)."

### **Becoming Part of a Team.**

Staff members at John H. Brown who did not fit the description of second-class citizen were placed in a category called team member. The term team member illustrates a sense of belonging. Individuals who are part of teams are usually respected and valued.

Their opinions are essential and their absence causes a disruption to the flow of activities. At John H. Brown, teachers who had healthy relationships with their co-teaching partners stated that they were part of a team. Teachers understood that being part of a team meant that someone else was counting on you. Teams did not form overnight: Teachers created teams through demonstrating mutual respect, similar work ethic, similar discipline methods, and common interests.

Keeping with this line of thinking, there were two roles that teachers espoused as a result of being a team member. They were classroom facilitator and instructional leader. A classroom facilitator is a person who ensures that the classroom runs smoothly no matter what. He or she will do whatever needs to get done to guarantee that a level of productivity is reached. Following facilitator is instructional leader; this person decides what will be taught and how it will be taught. Another way to think about it is, the facilitator is a ships engineer, making sure everything on the boat is functioning properly and the instructional leader is like the navigator of the ship, ensuring that the ship is going in the right direction. Both positions are vital to the success of the ship, ergo the facilitator and instructional leader are critical to the success of a co-taught classroom.

These two roles represent the types of responsibilities teachers accepted within their teams. These roles were sometimes interchangeable, however, the majority of the time special education teachers adopted the facilitator role and general education teachers adopted the instructional leader role. Both roles are essential cogs in the structure of successful co-teaching teams.

At John H. Brown a number of the special education teachers in the middle school are treated unfairly and are viewed as second-class citizens. However, I was afforded the

opportunity to speak with special education teachers who are gaining respect as a result of their position as a classroom facilitator. Team members who took on the role of a facilitator were seen performing tasks like collecting paper work, monitoring students academic performance, and correcting disruptive student behavior. Teachers understood all these tasks as being important parts of the role of a facilitator.

Teachers knew that each day they would be bombarded with a mountain of paperwork. Knowing that someone was there to handle the majority of the paperwork helped teachers become more productive with their day. Throughout the middle school, facilitators are seen ordering classroom materials, correcting student work, updating student rosters, logging student permission slips, and tallying money collected from student fundraisers. Teams who implemented the role of facilitator were able to start their instructional day faster than teams who did not. In a 45 minute period, some teams spent close to 15 minutes attempting to organize the daily paperwork. Often teachers would spend time pondering over what needs to be collected or what was already collected.

Teachers at John H. Brown School supplemented their district-mandated curriculum with enrichment activities. These activities were usually semester long projects called “culminating activities.” The projects were large and had a number of different components that made them difficult to grade. In the middle school, the instructional leader would design the project, however the facilitator would decide the length of time and the due date. The facilitator would also help students get organized and contact parents about the project.

The middle school students at John H. Brown are typical children. They range from well behaved to those that need constant monitoring. Both team members take part

in disciplining the students, but it is the facilitator who usually stops what he or she is doing to write a discipline referral about a student. Additionally, it is the facilitator who escorts students to the principal's office if they are unruly. Teams that were able to use the facilitator in this manner were successful with the overall discipline in their classrooms. When this arrangement was absent, teachers would bicker with one another about referrals and removing students. As a result, one of two things happened, students would not be disciplined or the entire ordeal would take too long.

With all of the ancillary components attached to school, one can lose sight of the true purpose of the organization. Therefore it is the job of the instructional leader to maintain a level of academic rigor within the classroom. The instructional leader is the person who performs the majority of the teaching in a team. This person is usually the general education teacher. He or she will take the curriculum assigned by the district, cut it into chunks, and deliver it to students in a way that makes sense. The instructional leader makes the tests, writes the lesson plans, and designs the projects. At John H. Brown, most of the instructional leaders were general education teachers.

Part of being the instructional leader is a false sense of authority. General education teachers behaved as if they were in charge of the entire classroom and all of its functions. Instructional leaders would look at the role of facilitator as a lower level position. It was not until the facilitator was out that the instructional leader recognized the value of that position. In some middle school classrooms, the instructional leader was lost without his or her facilitator partner.

My time at John H. Brown has only highlighted what teachers do with most of their time in a co-taught classroom. These assumptions are not concrete and do not

suggest that all co-teachers in this middle school behave like this. However, they do provide a rough sketch of the types of positions that teachers adopted within a team. In order to provide a more detailed picture, these assertions must be unpacked and supported with participant testimony.

Ms. Gibbons discussed how her current special education co-teaching partner is a facilitator in their classroom. She suggested that this role is essential to the co-teaching dynamic because it helps to keep students on task. She stated, “She’ll (special education teacher) circulate. We have tables in my room, so she’ll move from table to table and sit with kids. Sometimes she’ll pull a kid, if there’s one particular student that’s really struggling, she may pull them over.” She also alluded to the notion that a true facilitator is a person who is eager to know what needs to be done in the classroom. She goes on to say, “...she’ll grade something for me. She’ll take the papers home with her and grade those. Whatever needs to be done.” In a similar vein she stated, “If she (special education teacher) was in the room on her own, she would just pick up the papers and grade them. It wouldn’t be a matter of expecting that it was mine to grade... anything within the room, she just takes that initiative.”

Part of being a facilitator means being aware. Not only to the needs of the students and the classroom, but also to ones co-teaching partner. Ms. Samuels helps to support this idea by stating

I'm aware with my co-teacher. That's why I think I go into a room and if there's papers to grade, I know that this teacher's probably backed up with papers and hasn't had a minute or two to get to.... So, I'll take charge and I'll do it. Or if you're tired or not feeling well, then fine (I'll do it).

She also stated, “I can say for myself if I see a colleague in need of explanation or an extra pair of hands to do something to grade papers or advice or work on lesson plans, I don't mind doing that.” Ms. Simpson supported the notion of being aware by stating, “...when I get there I'm there to support. And if supporting means grading papers that day, then you know, I'm okay with that.” She continued this thought by stating “I understand their (general education teachers) needs ...needing somebody to help them grade papers or help them to do these extra things that isn't necessarily my job.”

As stated earlier, being a classroom facilitator means doing whatever it takes to ensure that the day runs smoothly. Sometimes this means collecting notes or paperwork. In some instances the facilitator will get the class settled and begin the morning homeroom procedures. Ms. Samuels stated, “Normally, like I said, I'll do like the roll call. I'll do the minor work that needs to be done in the morning to get the attendance out and stuff like that, collect any minor notes.” Once the class is settled, Ms. Samuels began to make her rounds as her co-teaching partner introduced the lesson. “I try to walk around as much as I can to help out with kids that I feel may be struggling or not getting the concept of what's being taught.” Ms. Simpson, a special education teacher, performs the same tasks within her classroom. She stated, “I'll sit with the students to make sure they're note taking or re-emphasizing something that they may have missed.”

Ms. Stevens, who is a special education teacher, stated, “I try to get here early, between 7:00 and 7:30, and I'll come into my room and try to set up for the day, anything I need.” She continued by stating, “...I'm in the hallways waiting for the kids to come in. I try to get them lined up right after the flag salute, because we lose a lot of time in transition.”

Seven of the 13 participants highlighted the special education teacher when discussing the role of facilitator; the other six participants did not acknowledge the question. Ms. Sanders stated, “I think that some special ed teachers try to go above and beyond with helping the every day needs of the teachers.” This does not mean however, that this role belonged exclusively to them. Participants suggested that in rare instances the general education teacher would take on or share the role of facilitator. This usually occurred when the co-teaching partners felt comfortable enough to switch positions, which also required a great deal of flexibility. Mr. Shannon supports this notion by stating, “So sometimes myself and the science teacher would break up the class in two, and I would go over the homework and he would go over the lesson. Then we'd switch.” In a separate interview Ms. Gibbons stated, “If I’m taking attendance, my co-teacher is collecting homework, getting the kids ready. Or if she’s taking attendance, I’m getting the kids ready.”

The role of a facilitator is not to be confused with that of an inclusion teacher (special education teacher who is in the general setting). The two positions sound similar, however they differ in the sense that some inclusion teachers will only instruct and grade their students, whereas a facilitator is a person who will do anything that needs to get done. Ms. Simpson suggested that in some instances the special education teacher would say, “I do mine and they do theirs.” Which illustrates how some special education teachers are not facilitators.

Aside from handling paper work, the biggest part of being a facilitator is keeping order in the classroom. Some participants described this as being a strong disciplinarian. Mr. Smith, who is a special education teacher, stated, “...before content, before

curriculum, you need to have the class under control.” This is not to say that being a disciplinarian is unique only to the role of facilitator, it is just one of the many parts of the role. Mr. Gates suggested that co-teaching is a parental relationship, in which students recognize that they have two separate parents in two separate roles. One of those roles being the facilitator. Mr. Gates stated, “It's like being parents. Sometimes I'll discipline a kid for whatever reason.... You have to be on top of the kids.” Mr. Shannon supported this notion by stating, “I had the dad role, being a disciplinarian. I had one child who had this whole defiant disorder going on. So he had to get up, walk around, and he started hitting kids. So I had to sit him down.”

During his interview, Mr. Gates suggested that being a facilitator takes a great deal of patience. This is why special education teachers usually assume this role. Mr. Gates goes on to state:

I think compared to me, the special ed teachers are very patient, very accommodating with (class room procedures), which is something pretty good because I think you need to be patient to be a good teacher. So I think compared to me, I think they're a little more patient, a little more individualistic compared to me.

Keeping with the theme of roles, participants were asked to identify any other possible positions that team members exhibited in the classroom. During each of the interviews, participants suggested, that in addition to the roles of facilitator, teachers espoused the position of an instructional leader. In this study, an instructional leader refers to a teacher who performs the majority of the teaching.



Of the 13 participants, 11 suggested that the general education teacher assumed the role of instructional leader in the classroom; the other two participants did not answer the question. Mr. Adkins stated, “When I was a teacher, it was always the general ed teacher (leading the lesson), and I hated it, because to me it was too much money wasted.”

Participants highlighted a number of reasons for this arrangement, however, the main factor was the “dominant personality” of the general education teacher. Both administrators and teachers agreed that general education teachers exuded a more dominant role in the classroom, thereby putting them in an instructional leadership position. This dominant personality is often a result of the movement of teachers, physical space, and the subject being taught. General education teachers do not have to move from class to class. They do not have to share a desk or materials with anyone. Lastly, they teach the same subject all day.

Ms. Andrews argued that general education teachers take the lead because they are in the same classroom all day, teaching the same subject. She stated that, “The general education teacher is used to running their own show, used to having the classroom to themselves. They have their own routine. They have their own method of doing things.” Mr. Smith supports this idea by stating, “Most of the time the general ed teachers, they like being on the overhead and teaching the whole class. They don’t like working in small groups.”

In an interview with Ms. Gifford, she discussed how she respects everyone in the classroom, however, she still needs to maintain a sense of control. She stated, “In teaching, you see your classroom as your domain. The students answer to you. Even

when administrators come in, it's your classroom. You're running it the way you want within the parameters of the district.”

According to Ms. Gifford and two other participants, general education teachers will take charge of the lesson to ensure that students are learning the proper material. She goes on to say, “I'm going to kind of direct the lesson. I've taken charge of what our objective is for the lesson and where it needs to go.” She later stated, “I tend to be a very dominant personality...I don't think I was able to truly accept that's who I was.” Five participants also indirectly suggested that some general education teachers adopt the role of instructional leader because they believe in the notion that “its my way or the highway.” Mr. Adkins supported this idea of control by stating, “Most of the general ed teachers are you know, this is my classroom. My rules.”

Another factor that is related to the dominant nature of the general education teacher is the notion of planning. All participants indirectly suggested that the general education teacher constructed most of the plans and the special education teacher was only responsible for modification and accommodations. Ms. Samuels stated that with regards to planning, “The most conversation we'll have is okay, we're doing this, this and this.” She also stated, “So there really isn't much like okay, what do you want to teach today and we'll plan it out that way.” As stated earlier, most of the general education teachers teach the same subject all day, therefore they already have a plan constructed in their mind. Most special education teachers stated that this did not offend them because they understood that the general education teachers behaved like a tape recorder, repeating themselves over and over again. Ms. Sanders supported this idea by stating, “...sometimes with the general ed teachers, they've had three or four classes the exact

same way so they're so used to doing everything how they've set it up... that they don't necessarily always talk things over first." She later stated, "...they're just kind of set in their ways."

With regards to planning, Mr. Adams confirmed that a number of general education teachers write the lesson plans for both the general education students and the special education students. As stated earlier the special education teacher is mainly responsible for the accommodations and modifications. By allowing the general education teacher to write the lesson plans for the entire class, this takes away some of the power from the special education teacher and places the general education teacher in more of a leadership position. Mr. Adams indicated that some of the general education teachers will say, "I'll do your lesson plans, you just do the accommodations.... that's one person being the dominant and one being the passive." Mr. Adams continued with this idea by suggesting that instead of questioning the lesson plans and adding their input, the special education teachers will, "...accept it and do the modifications." He believes "...that's how the tone is set." He concludes this thought by stating, "In very few instances, the inclusion teacher will actually write the lesson plans for the general education teacher."

Ms. Gifford proposed that the reason the general education teachers adopt the role of instructional leader is because they are responsible for more in the classroom. Ms. Gifford believes that general education teachers have more responsibilities than special education teachers. These responsibilities range from report cards to parent conferences. The nature of responsibility alone thrust one into the role of an instructional leader. Ms. Gifford stated:

Everything is my responsibility. There isn't anything that isn't my responsibility. It's all my responsibility. So -- but what part is your responsibility? Because the reality is they're not gonna call your co-teacher for any of the paperwork....if they're not a special-ed student, then you don't have to go down (to the main office). You're not responsible to answer to that parent. I am.

So in essence she feels like, "The general-ed teacher kind of has to take the full brunt of all the responsibility. The system is set not that it's the co-teacher's fault the system kind of has set it up that way."

### **Elements of Co-Teaching Relationships**

Within most professions, employees are required to interact with each other. These interactions inevitably evolve into relationships. Within the realm of k-12 education some teachers are forced to interact with each other on a daily basis: These situations are referred to as co-taught classes. These interactions range from pleasant to burdensome. Throughout this study, teachers were asked to describe the types of relationships that were formed between them and their co-teaching partner. A number of participants did not use a specific label to describe their relationship with their co-teaching partner; instead, they used clever metaphors and similes to describe their relationship. In addition, participants identified four factors that influenced their relationships with their co-teaching partners: trust, respect, age and friendship. Within this study these four factors will be compartmentalized, however; it is important to keep in mind that these factors can never truly be isolated because each one affects the other.

## How Does Trust Impact Co-Teaching Relationships?

Teachers at the John H. Brown School suggested that trust was one of the most important factors in a co-teaching relationship. The idea of trust was exhibited through teachers' daily actions. In a co-taught classroom there are usually two teachers attempting to instruct a heterogeneous group of students. Teachers who trusted their partner were able to divide the workload more evenly. They made comments like, "don't worry ... I took care of that form for you and I signed your name" or "I will pick up the class form gym so you can meet with that parent." Teachers who trusted one another were able to work as one unit: speaking for each other, signing papers for each other, and disciplining each others students. Essentially, teachers who trusted their partner dropped the word "I" and used the word "we" in their dealings with parents and administrators.

However, like any relationship, it is easy for one person to take on more responsibility, due to underlying mistrust. In very few instances teachers insinuated that their partner was so incompetent that they could not be trusted to do anything. In these cases teachers would make comments like, "I'll pick up the kids... if I leave them with you we might have WWII on our hands." This eventually led to one partner becoming angry with the other.

Teachers at John H. Brown were split in their understanding of how much their partner trusted them. General education teachers suggested that their partners trusted them completely. Whereas special education teachers stated that their partners only trusted them partially. However, the actions of both the special education teachers and the general education teachers lead me to believe that the above blanket statement cannot be made. The idea of trust at John H. Brown can only be examined on a case-by-case basis.

It is not accurate to state that, overall special education teachers trusted their partner's more than general education teachers. Both general education and special education teachers proposed contradictory ideas with regards to how much their partner trusted them. In one interview a teacher would insinuate that his or her partner never trusted them, but in the follow up interview state that, their partner gives them all of the classroom responsibility when they are absent.

My time at John H. Brown has revealed that perceived trust could only be examined on a case-by-case basis. However, I can say that overall trust is impacted by a teacher's ability to discipline students. Teachers used classroom management techniques as a gauge for measuring ones' worth. The minute a new teacher stepped into the building, the staff would leave that person by themselves to see how they interacted with the students, if the classroom was under control, you were accepted, if the classroom was unruly you were ostracized.

This was an informal initiation: once you passed; you were privy to all the secrets, gossip, and lastly, the benefit of being trusted. Overall, teachers understood that the first component of teaching is keeping your class under control. If that is not accomplished, how can you be trusted to do anything else?

Aside from discipline, a select group of teachers stated that ones' ability to complete paper work was another component of trust. A good portion of a teacher's day is spent filling out forms and grading papers. Once a person was able to keep the class under control, he or she must be fairly competent at completing basic paperwork. If one was unable to complete basic paperwork, he or she could not be trusted.

Participants suggested that trust could lead to respect, which can ultimately lead to friendship. Ms. Sanders supported this notion by proposing that "...if you want to team teach you have to be able to trust the person you're teaching with. That's where the friendship and respect comes in." Participants explained that trust means being able to depend on the person that you are working with. Mr. Shannon stated, "...it's vital in the sense that you should be able to trust them, you know? And depend on them." As stated earlier, a teacher's dependability was measured by two standards, their ability to complete paperwork when their partner was missing and their ability to control the class when their partner was missing. In certain scenarios, trust was lost and tension was created when one co-teaching partner was unable to "pick up the slack" when their partner had to leave. A prime example of this was seen in an interview with Ms. Gifford. She described an instance where she had a co-teaching partner who was completely unable to discipline the class when she was out of the room. In turn this created more work for her. She stated, "If I stepped just outside the door or someone came to the door and I stepped just outside the door, the students took that immediately as a signal that they were left alone with that person sitting right there." She goes on to state, "No matter what I kind of gently suggested or ...something about their physical demeanor or something in their voice. I could never quite figure out what it was."

Ms. Gifford ultimately started to dismiss her partner and treat him as if he were a substitute. This caused a great deal of tension within their relationship. Discipline was very important to participants; if you were not a strong disciplinarian you could not be trusted and you were not looked at as an equal among the teachers. Ms. Gifford later states:

Yeah, it was frustrating. It was frustrating for me because I wanted to treat him as an equal, and yet I never let him solely feel like he was an equal because if you can't handle the students without me being there, even for a short period of time, it wasn't like you were teaching the whole day.

Mr. Gallons insinuated that usually the general education teacher did not trust their co-teaching partner. Mr. Gallons suggested that, general education teachers feel that everything is their responsibility, so they should not trust anyone else to handle part of the workload. However, he proposed that general education teachers must learn to trust their partner and give up some control. He believes that one should acknowledge their weaknesses and learn from the strengths of their co-teaching partner. This will ultimately foster a more productive relationship. The general education teachers need to admit that they "...can't reach everyone and someone is there that might be better trained. So it requires you to understand you have limits and you can't do it all and you need help." In order to fully promote this idea there must be a level of flexibility between the partners. Mr. Gates supported this thought by stating, "I think you need both people to be able to be flexible and then use each other and trust each other."

In a separate interview, Mr. Shannon supported Mr. Gallon's idea of trust by suggesting that trust depends on the teacher's willingness to adopt a role. Teachers must trust that if their partner has adopted a certain role in the classroom, they will fulfill that role. He stated, "A lot of it (trust) depends on, whether both partners are willing to take on a role, and what role that is going to be, whether that's good cop, bad cop, mom role, dad role." He concluded this thought by stating, "In the end, they both need to support



their decisions with the child. If one makes the decision, the other one should support that decision as well.”

Earlier in this chapter the role of second-class citizen was mentioned. Within that role was the issue of scheduling. Many participants stated that scheduling was one of the biggest contributing factors to the role of second-class citizen. The idea of scheduling is also a major part of trust. Mr. Adams suggested that general education teachers feel like they cannot trust the special education teachers because they could be pulled to cover another class. As stated earlier by Mr. Adams, “...how do I know you're going to be here tomorrow, so how can I trust you to teach the next lesson?”

### **Earning Respect**

All individuals, regardless of race, gender, or creed desire respect. Respect is an issue that is part of every organization throughout the world. Overall, teachers at John H. Brown were respectful to each other. Teachers did not complain about overt forms of disrespect. Many of them suggested that disrespect was connected to trust. In certain instances teachers would not trust their partner: many of them undermined their partners authority in front of students. For instance one teacher might instruct a group of students to perform one task and another teacher tells that exact same group of students to do something else. Teachers at John H. Brown thought that this was the ultimate form of disrespect.

At John H. Brown this was a common problem between the special education and general education teachers. Both types of teachers were reported undermining each other's authority in the classroom. This caused underlining tension within the co-team and eventually led to some sort of verbal altercation. The perfect analogy to describe this

situation would be a person walking around a room spilling gasoline on the floor.

Everyone that walks passed the room can see the gasoline being spilled and can smell it from a distance. All that needs to happen is one spark and the whole room goes up in flames.

Teachers understood that there were three aspects that added to ones “respect bank.” They included years teaching, work ethic, and number of students assigned to the instructor. Teachers who were older and or more experienced received more respect than their younger counterparts. Teachers who were more experienced attended fewer meetings than novice teachers. More experienced teachers also were questioned less, this in turn made them believe that their peers trusted them more. These teachers were respected regardless of their teaching ability and work ethic.

Work ethic was another component that added to ones respect bank. Teachers who pulled their own weight generated a great deal of respect from their colleagues. Teachers were reported saying things like, “Jake, I see that you always get your progress reports done so fast... How do you do that?” Teachers who were hard workers were also respected for their opinions and advice. The last factor that could add points to ones respect bank was the number of students for which one was responsible. Teachers at John H. Brown respected teachers who had large classes.

Throughout this study teachers repeatedly highlighted respect as one of the key factors in both successful and unsuccessful relationships. Mr. Adkins explained, “You don't have to love each other. You just have to respect each other. Do your job, and do it well, bottom line.” He later concluded this thought by explaining, “If people respect one

another, and realize that it's just for the children, I think it would be more beneficial than being friends.”

Most participants argued that there is always some level of respect that exists between co-teaching partners. As stated earlier, teachers on a whole are usually never openly disrespectful to their co-teaching partners. However, there are some cases where teachers are disrespectful in clandestine ways. This is usually exhibited when teachers defy the rules of their partner. Participants gave examples of disrespect that were centered on students. Mr. Shannon explained that

when you're trying to get that child to sit down and get some work done. You've got one teacher who's now the bad guy.... ‘You need to sit down. Let's get some work done.’ ...And the other teacher who's now going to be the good guy for this child.... ‘Oh, just hang out with me.’

He later continued this thought by explaining, “It's like two different parenting styles for your own children. Parents butt heads all the time, whether they're married or divorced, on how to raise a kid.” This butting of heads can be perceived as a lack of respect for ones partner.

Ms. Andrews argued that respect is usually lost when a person is trying to do less work than their partner. Ms. Andrews recalls a situation where there was a special education teacher who was switched three times because they wanted to do nothing in the classroom. She explained:

I have one teacher this year who was switched three times already, and it was the special education teacher that was actually switched. This person wanted to take

a laid-back role, and every person that the person was with wanted this person to be proactive.

Ms. Andrews alluded to the notion that teachers who adopt a laid back approach to co-teaching ultimately lose respect from their co-teaching partners.

Mr. Shannon insinuated that in rare situations the number of students you are responsible for affects your level of respect. Technically special education teachers are contractually responsible for fewer students than their general education counterparts. Therefore, some teachers suggest that special education teachers command less respect. Mr. Shannon confirms this assertion by explaining, "We're both teaching. You know? But there's like an out in the sense that the general ed might view the special ed as, You only have a few kids. So what do you have to worry about?"

Mr. Shannon continued by suggesting that the general education teacher only appreciates and respects the special education teacher when they are absent. This was largely due to the fact that some general education teachers did not feel comfortable instructing the special education students without their co-teaching partner there to assist or in some cases lead. Mr. Shannon justified this claim by stating it is not "...until the special ed teacher's out. And then they're (general education teacher) dealing with my special ed kids. (Do they start to think) I'm glad you're back."

In a separate interview, Mr. Gallons proposed that special education teachers should be respected based on their education and the skills that they possess. According to Mr. Gallons, special education teachers have a unique set of skills that are valuable to co-teaching and they should be respected for them. He explained, "A special ed teacher,

they are given more techniques on how to bring the student on board to what it is that they need to get. I can learn something from the special ed teacher as well.”

The last component that affected the amount of respect that teachers gave to their co-teaching partners was age or years teaching. Teachers who were teaching for a long period of time received more respect than teachers who were teaching for a short amount of time.

### **Mentors or Burnouts**

Throughout my time at John H. Brown, teachers and administrators highlighted age or years teaching as an important factor that affected the ways in which teachers formed relationships. Teachers mainly focused on how older staff members interacted with younger staff members. Older teachers were given one of two labels, mentor or burnout. Mentors are experienced teachers who guide their younger counterparts. Burnouts are older teachers unwilling to change.

Mentorship seemed to occur both formally and informally at John H. Brown. Some teachers were assigned mentors by the administration. Other teachers just took certain novice teachers underneath their wing. The majority of the mentor-mentee relationships were informal. Many of the younger teachers just gravitated to individuals who they saw being successful. The mentor-mentee relationships were not limited to subject and grade level. Experienced teachers took it upon themselves to guide teachers who were in different grades and different content areas as a welcoming gesture. The only aspect of teaching that teachers shied away from was classroom discipline. Many teachers stated that it was something a novice teacher should figure out on their own, suggesting that it is “baptism by fire.” However, there are those rare cases, where a

teacher is really struggling with a class and a more experienced teacher will come to assist.

Understanding how beneficial the mentor-mentee relationship can be to the success of a classroom, the administration takes every measure to pair experienced teachers with novice teachers. For some at John H. Brown, this was the ideal co-teaching experience. The older teacher was allowed to keep some of his or her autonomy, while guiding someone else and the novice teacher was allowed to enter the field of education with a coach to lead the way. Essentially, novice teachers learned the basics of the field from seasoned teachers and seasoned teachers were exposed to new ideas.

Teachers at John H. Brown enjoyed this type of relationship because it reminded them of a family structure. Some seasoned teachers were old enough to be their co-teachers parent. Surprisingly, younger teachers enjoyed being partnered with older teachers because the older teachers would “baby” them. This “babying” ranged from cleaning their workstation to making them lunch. Several older teachers felt refreshed to be working with a younger person because they loved being a parental figure and taking care of someone.

The ideas of age and experience are very polar topic for teachers at John H. Brown. Older more experienced teachers exhibited two types of behavior. The first type being a mentor (which was discussed earlier) and the second type being a burnout. The term *burnout* is a term that I use to describe the actions of teachers who are nonproductive staff members. A burnout is a teacher who has one or all of the following qualities. They are close to retirement and take an excessive amount of days off. They have given up on classroom discipline. They are not open to any one’s opinion. They let

their partner do all of the work. Both mentor and burnout represent two sides of the spectrum with regards to older more experienced teachers.

Teachers who were paired with burnouts had toxic relationships. Burnouts were unwilling to listen to their partner, they would dismiss their thoughts, and say things like “that’s a great idea but lets do this.” Younger teachers who were paired with burnouts often had to suffer in silence because they did not want to go to the administration and complain. They felt as though this was a sign of weakness. Younger novice teachers were too scared to say anything for fear of losing their job.

Several medium experience (5-10 years) teachers were indifferent about being paired with burnouts. They did not care because they knew that they would control the entire classroom because the burnout would not step up. In order to confirm and concretize the ideas presented thus far, participant testimonies are needed.

As stated earlier, participants suggested that mentorship was an important component in teacher relationships. Interactions between teachers were very loving when older teachers mentored their younger co-teaching partners. Mr. Adams stated, “...the older ones mentor the young ones. We have a lot of mothering because we have a large male population, younger male, and the older female staff members, they mother, almost to a fault.”

In a separate interview Mr. Adams supported his original thought by stating, “Most of the time, they like to take people under their wing and guide them. You know, the mentor (usually) has been the inclusion specialist or some of the other seasoned teachers.”

Mr. Gates supported the idea of mentorship by explaining that older teachers tended to give their younger co-teaching partners helpful advice that they would not be able to get from the administration or any other source. He also argued that many of the mentor-mentee relationships were not formal. He goes on to say, “I think the older teachers tend to look out for the younger teachers, you know? I mean, it’s not really a formal, you’re my mentor. But if I ever needed anything I could ask them.”

Keeping with the idea of mentorship, Mr. Smith suggested that the knowledge that he gained from his older co-teaching partner was invaluable. His partners’ presence helped to guide him during his first year as a teacher. He explained that during his first year he was paired with an older lady. Each day he would watch how she conducted the class in order to hone his skills as a teacher. Mr. Smith explained, “I would just watch her do it and kind of get the feel. And then maybe I was there 3 months or so, and then I would start doing the lessons and everything (with her).” He concluded by stating, “It was invaluable to be able to watch her and how she did the lesson and how she asked the kids and how she waited for the response. How she taught the class.” Throughout the transcripts participants agree that mentorship is an important factor that affects teacher relationships. Good mentors produce good protégés, which eventually create good co-teaching relationships.

In a similar vein, Ms. Gifford believes that it is the duty of the older teacher to mentor their younger co-teaching partner. She feels that there was a point in which that older teacher was in the younger teachers shoes. She explains, “From years of experience I take on that role. I know what it was like when I started teaching, and I was very fortunate that I had more veteran teachers there to help me.”



In addition to acknowledging the mentor-mentee relationships, participants pointed out that some older teachers were less willing to change or listen to their younger co-teaching partner. When this situation occurred, relationships tended to be strained and unstable. Mr. Adams proposed that relationships between older and younger co-teaching partners usually become strained when the older teacher is not willing to modify the classroom to accommodate two teachers. These older teachers feel that the classroom is theirs and the teacher that is paired with them is visiting. Mr. Adams stated, “Because you can't teach an old dog new tricks, and they're master of their own domain.... You're a guest in my house.... This is my classroom. You're visiting me for the 90 minutes.”

In certain situations, veteran teachers hindered the bond that was formed with their younger co-teaching partner. As stated earlier, this was primarily due to the fact that they were used to doing things their way for so long. Mr. Gates supported this thought by stating:

I was paired off with an older lady who was on her last year. It was my first year; it was her last year. I was ready to gun ho. First year teaching, I'm ready to walk in the classroom. I'm ready to open my mouth, and all of a sudden she comes out of nowhere and lays down the law the first day.

Ms. Simpson supports this notion by highlighting a situation in which she had to teach language arts with an older teacher who was not willing to give up any control. She stated, “I really struggled because the teacher was an older woman, (she) had been teaching a very long time and was very hesitant to let someone else come in the room and take any type of control. So it was really tough.”

Mr. Shannon suggested that some teachers become burnt out and less social after working for an extended amount of time in the classroom. Currently, Mr. Shannon pulls students from different teachers to provide supplementary services to students. One of the teachers that he pulls students from is withdrawn. Mr. Shannon stated, “The teacher that I pulled my kids out from, she had probably about 30 years into teaching in city and was burnt out, in my opinion, and not very social.”

With regards to age, participants implied that younger teachers feel intimidated when paired with a veteran teacher. Therefore, without that mentor-mentee relationship, tension has the opportunity to build. Ms. Gifford stated, “I think sometimes it can be very intimidating for a younger teacher to come into a veteran teacher’s room. And sometimes as veteran teachers’, we’re very I’ll speak for myself, very set in my way of doing things.” She also alluded to the notion that veteran teachers are not dismissing their co-teaching partners intentionally. Teachers develop patterns, which become difficult to break. She continued this thought by stating, “I think you just become so used to doing things that sometimes (you cant stop) and sometimes I think as veteran teachers, we’re not used to new ideas. Sometimes you get ingrained in what you want to do.”

Among the participants, there was one unique case in which the younger teacher accepted working with an older teacher who wanted to do nothing. As stated earlier, some teachers become burnt out and are counting down the days until retirement. Ms. Stevens recounts a situation in which she was paired with a teacher in her 60s who did nothing. Ms. Stevens accepted her partner’s poor work ethic and looked at the situation as an opportunity to take charge of the class. She explained, “I worked with someone who was 60. But you know what? We worked really well together. I pretty much ended up

doing everything, because I think that, at this point, she was kind of just collecting a paycheck at this point.” She later went on to say, “We worked well together because my personality like I said, I’m not confrontational and our personalities were fine. We worked well together because I was willing to take on most of the work.”

Participants also highlighted the idea that teachers who are close to the same age or years of experience have more positive relationships. During her interview, Ms. Gifford reflected on her current co-teaching partners first year.

When she started out as a new teacher, the first teacher she was paired with as the inclusion teacher.... they came....they were brand-new teachers together. They entered the classroom together. So she started out in her first year of teaching without a preconceived notion that it was someone else’s room because her and her teacher started together. They had the same .... no experience. It was their first classroom together, so she kind of developed that.

Ms. Gifford suggested that it was a positive experience for both of them because they had the same level of experience and no preconceived notion about what teaching should be.

### **Is Friendship Necessary?**

Teachers and administrators at John H. Brown were on the fence about the importance of friendship. Half of the participants suggested that teaching is just a job and, like any job, you are paid to work, not make friends. The other group of participants stated that friendship was one of the most important components to a successful co-teaching relationship. Many of them made comments like, “How do you expect to get any work done if your not friends on some level?”

This group of participants suggested that teachers should have some sort of bond that extends beyond teaching students. These bonds help to remove some of the awkwardness that is associated with being paired with a stranger. In addition, participants stated that this would improve the delivery of instruction. This does not mean however that teachers are required to spend time with their co-teaching partners outside of work. Conversely, the administration had a completely different view on the subject. The administration indicated that friendship in the classroom causes some teachers to become lazy because their co-teaching partner will not hold them accountable.

Both Mr. Adkins and Ms. Andrews proposed that friendship is a double-edged sword. Knowing your co-teaching partner allows the day to go smoother; however, it can lead to unprofessional behavior. Mr. Adkins supports this idea when he stated, "Sometimes if you're buddy-buddy, you tend to cover for each other." He later elaborates on this notion by explaining:

If they're too friendly, (they might say to their partner)"Do me a favor. Do you want to sneak out and get lunch? I'll cover you." You know what I mean? You have to be careful of someone too friendly, because if they're too friendly, they may take advantage of one another, well not take advantage, but almost look out for one another.

In a different interview, Ms. Andrews also alluded to the idea that friendship "could be a double-edge sword." She suggested that the most important factor within any co-teaching team is philosophical beliefs. A team of teachers could be the best of friends outside of work; however, if they have completely different methods of managing a classroom, it could mean the end of their friendship. "I think a friendship works in a

classroom when they are philosophically on the same plane when it comes to their philosophy of teaching.” In some instances teachers can “...be really good friends outside the classroom, but their behavior management, their style, their philosophy of teaching is different.” This then leads to “butting of heads” which causes “...the demise of a friendship (which in the end) hurts our children.” Only two teachers agreed with the administrations view on friendship. Among them, Mr. Gallons, who suggested, “Friendships can evolve when you both are meeting the goals. It’s a job, so you’re not being paid to make friends. I also ....we have to be social and professional, but we’re not paid to be friends.” In a different interview, Ms. Gifford supported Mr. Gallon’s idea by stating, “I think friendship can make the situation easier, but it could also be a hindrance, so I don’t think friendship is required.” She concluded this thought by stating, “Sometimes the friendship can be distracting because you can easily be taken off task from your teaching with talking too much. (Also) if you don’t agree on something within the classroom, you don’t want to hurt your friend’s feelings.”

Mr. Shannon makes a persuasive argument for friendship by suggesting that friendship is important because it shows the students how they should interact with each other. He believes that teachers are role models; therefore, they should demonstrate how to form healthy work relationships. He goes on to explain, “Teachers model everything for kids. Model how to dress, how to behave, how to react. How to deal with stress. How to interact. And if the co-teachers can't model working together and being friends, how can they teach well together?” He later poses two questions that illustrate his enthusiasm about friendship. “If you don't find that common ground with your co-teacher, how can

you make that work? If you're not friends with or you can't see yourself being friends with this person, how can you make co-teaching work?"

Keeping with this idea, Ms. Gibbons insinuated that students are aware of their teachers' behavior toward one another. She stated, "The kids can feel if there is something not working between the two teachers and they'll pick up on it right away." Students will say to each other "Oh, this one doesn't like that one....This one doesn't like that one. So I think it's very important that you have a friendship between your co-teacher."

Mr. Gates believes that the concept of friendship is simple: if you like someone or get along with him or her, than you are going to be more productive. He confirms this thought by stating, "I think it's important to be friendly. I think it's important to care about the person. I mean, do you need to be friends outside of work and call each other up over the weekend? No, I don't think so." Yet, "I think ...if you like someone, you're gonna work better with them." He concluded this thought by stating, "Obviously when you're with someone for while, like, your wife or one of your best friends, you could tend to finish their sentences, which you know, obviously I think is .... important." Ms. Gibbons supports this notion by stating, "It's just a great feeling to know that you can work with somebody that doesn't hate you. You don't fight with them."

In a similar line of thinking, Ms. Samuels believes that "Friendship plays a great part in what I do in working with another co-teacher. If you don't have a friendship... then it's not gonna work out." Co-teaching partners who do not get along make it obvious in their day-to-day actions. She concluded this thought by stating, "You can always

distinguish who has a closer relationship with one another, I think (co-teaching) is a friendship based on what we need to get done and respecting one another.”

Mr. Smith and three other participants argued, “Most people are open towards it.” (Friendship) and “...are happy to work with someone.” In certain instances, teaching is a very isolated profession in which individuals go hours without adult contact. Mr. Smith stated that in one class the “...whole day I really wouldn’t talk to anyone else, just me and the kids. And like after awhile I’m just like (frustrated). They (teachers) kind of enjoy having a second teacher in there.”

In a later interview, Mr. Smith suggested that teachers inevitably form some sort of bond because they are working together everyday. He explained, “I think you inevitably do become friends. The co-teachers I’ve worked with, I’m very friendly with them now, whereas I didn’t really know them when I started working with them.” In addition he alluded to the notion that teachers are forced to form some kind of bond because they want to avoid any unwanted attention from the administration. If you are unable to get along with your partner it “...reflects poorly on you.”

### **A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words**

During my time at John H. Brown several participants used metaphors and similes to paint vivid depictions of their understanding of co-teaching relationships. Eleven out of 13 participants compared co-teaching to a relationship or a marriage (forced marriage). The other two participants did not respond to the question. Marriages and relationship are both institutions that require individuals to express some form of caring for their partner. Therefore, one can deduce that teachers’ value compassion as an important factor between co-teaching partners.

Ms. Andrews argued that co-teaching is like a relationship. Both individuals need to show some form of compassion for their partner. Her ideals almost directly mimic the vows that individuals take when they get married. She states:

it's a give-and-take. It's compromising; it's loving that person sometimes, but not liking them that day. It's giving them that positive reinforcement when you're having a bad day, knowing once you give them that little bit of a push or back off, it's when the person coming in might've had a bad day at home... if one of the teachers is going through a personal struggle, that other teacher, if they're getting along really well, kind of just takes on the role of, "I'll take care of everything, and we'll work it out."

She concludes this thought by suggesting that, just like a marriage or partnership, co-teachers are there "...to help each other." She believes that like any relationship you are not always going to be friends and you are not always going to get along, however you do need to care about the person you are partnered with if the arrangement is going to be positive. Ms. Simpson stated, "I think that's what a marriage is (all about). You try to make it work, people have to bend and that's what co-teaching is sometimes like. So like a relationship not a marriage. A relationship."

Keeping with the theme of marriage, Mr. Adkins stated that co-teaching is like "...a marriage. If it's not healthy, it's not going to be successful, just like in any marriage. If the mother and father are constantly arguing, and not supporting each other, the kids are going to pick up on it." In some cases "...it's like having a roommate, but on the flipside, if the two people get along and respect each other, it's the greatest thing ever."



Two participants felt that the term marriage was an inaccurate description of the relationships formed between co-teaching partners. Mr. Smith suggested that co-teaching was more of "...an arranged marriage, not even a marriage, because you really have (no input about who you will work with), I could be put in fifth grade, I could be put (anywhere) I really don't have a choice."

Mr. Shannon supported this idea by explaining, "Everybody's saying it's like a marriage. It's like a marriage. It's like a marriage. I've been married. It's not all that great." He concluded this thought by saying you are "...tossed into (a classroom) two people who never worked with each other are put together and then in a matter of a couple days are supposed to develop this type of bond and teach these kids."

Mr. Gates stated that co-teaching for him was like a theatrical play. Both he and his partner are like actors. He stated that it is not like marriage, but more like an "... act or a play. It's kind of tough if one person knows what they're doing and the other one (doesn't) know when to jump in. (they don't know their lines)"

In a separate interview, Mr. Gates compared some of the co-teaching relationships to football. To him a co-taught classroom is somewhat like a sports team and "With (any) successful football team, it's not always the head coach, he has assistants and the assistants work together and that's why I take a lot of what I do on the football field, hopefully, into the classroom."

Ms. Gibbons supports the notion that co-teaching is like a sports team. She explained, "I've been on a lot of teams growing up, and there were always two coaches, and the two coaches worked together to make the team what it was." She later states, "I

think that (co-teaching) definitely can relate to sports and coaching in any sport, ‘cause you’re always trying to make it become a team sport, not just an individual sport.”

Mr. Gallons described his relationship with his partner as a choir. If both parties are not in tune to the needs of their partner and the needs of the students, dissonance is created. However, when both partners listen to each other and respond to each other’s request, harmony is created.

### **Administrative Influence**

All organizations possess leaders. These are the individuals who have formal authority over a group of people. In the world of k-12 education the organizational leaders are the supervisors, assistant principals, principals, assistant superintendents, and superintendent. These are the individuals who make crucial decisions that affect large groups of teachers. For the purpose of this study three administrators were interviewed; supervisor, assistant principal and principal. All three administrators are interwoven into the culture of the John H. Brown School and each possesses a unique perspective on co-teaching. During this study, both teachers and administrators underscored three main ideas that encapsulated the theme of administration: support, professional development, and scheduling. These three ideas assist in answering the research questions related to administration. In addition, this section of chapter IV will attempt to isolate the differences between the administrative staff’s understanding of co-teaching and the teachers understanding of co-teaching.

### **Does the Administration Support Co-Taught Classrooms?**

Administrators at John H. Brown suggested that they created an environment in which teachers could ask for any type of help. In other words, administrators alleged that

they provided teachers with as much support as they could in order for them to succeed. Overall, the administration was supportive of the individual needs of the teachers. However, they were not supportive of the needs of co-taught classrooms as a whole.

Teachers were free to ask the administration for help regarding a number of things, including materials, leaving to go the doctor, or changing classroom. Teachers at John H. Brown were very happy with the administration when it came to these aspects of work. Conversely, teachers felt alone when they needed help with their co-teaching partner. The overall opinion of the administration was “figure it out on your own.” Teachers at John H. Brown were insulted by this stance and assumed that the administration was supposed to be the leaders of the building; therefore, they should be able to assist with co-teaching problems.

The administration stated that many of the teacher’s complaints were unfair. It is the job of the administration to be the instructional leaders of the building not to be relationship counselors. Many of the issues that are entrenched in co-teaching are problems that the administration is just not equipped to deal with. The administration believes that both parties should be professional and work it out.

Nevertheless, teachers at John H. Brown continued to report their problems to the administration. They believe that their problems are not trivial and if they are asking for help, then they need it. Many of the problems that the administration was presented with cluster around scheduling and pairing of teachers. Teachers at John H. Brown are becoming increasingly frustrated with these two issues. Usually, general education teachers would ask to be paired with a special education teacher who had a similar

background. This request would never be acknowledged and teachers from two totally different content areas would often be paired together.

Throughout my time at John H. Brown, I asked participants to describe the type of support that was provided by the administration. Support was understood as the way in which the administration helped the co-teaching teams. Participants' responses reflect an array of different types of support or lack of support. Within this section of the study, teachers' answers to the question of support varied considerably. However, teachers responses all clustered around one central premise; "Your on your own." Seven teachers stated that the support provided by the administration was lackluster and ornamental at best.

Mr. Adkins suggested that true support could only come from the building level administrators because central office and district level administrators were too far removed to understand what actually occurs in a building. He stated, "When you evaluate someone, I think at the district level, you're not familiar with what's going on, on a daily basis. So, when you come in and evaluate someone, you just see it for that one-day for 45 minutes." He goes on to say, "I think, the building level (principal and assistant principal) has a better idea of what truly goes on than what the district level does."

Participants noted that one aspect of support was the way in which the administration helped teachers solve their differences. If two co-teaching partners are not getting along, what does the administration do? When asked how he helps teachers solve their problems, Mr. Adkins stated that he encourages teachers to try and solve problems on their own, before bringing it to the attention of the administration. This is primarily

due to the fact that the administration's solution will always be in the best interest of the students, not the teachers. Sometimes these solutions do not sit well with the teachers. Therefore, teachers are expected to solve their own problems. Mr. Adkins supported this notion by stating, "They usually bring it (problems) to an administrator, then we tell them, 'Make it work,' because you're not going to like the suggestion that we give you." Mr. Shannon supports this notion by suggesting that the administration has said to him, "You've got to solve your own problems. Come to me if it's very important." Mr. Shannon also suggested that the administration puts most of the responsibility on the teachers with regards to co-teaching because the administrators are unable to solve many of the problems. When asked the direct question, "Could you go to the administration and say, 'Could you help me in terms of showing me a better method (of solving my issues with my partner)?" Mr. Shannon responded by saying, "I could, but they didn't have an idea of what a better method was anyway."

Mr. Gallons believes that the administration's stance on problems between co-teaching partners is flawed. He believes that if two people are having difficulty with co-teaching it is the administration's responsibility to help them fix their partnership. He thinks that if the co-teachers had the skills to solve their own problems; they would not be at war in the first place. He stated that if there are problems "...between the two (teachers), that means they don't have the skills to solve it (on their own). There has to be a third party (administration) to come in to solve it." He concluded this thought by stating, "But no, you didn't do that. You don't send the third party to solve it; you just leave them in there."

In a similar line of thinking, Ms. Gifford stated, "Once you start your day, the administrators (pays no attention to you) you're pretty much left to your own resolve." She later stated, "When you're thrown into a co-teaching situation, if you've never done it before .... even the co-teaching models .... to have it formalized and know that there are different models that you can choose from, we don't even get that."

When the administration does need to step in, they usually conduct a meeting with both teachers to talk it out and discuss a corrective action plan. This plan could include workshops or visiting model classrooms. Mr. Adams explained, "If they haven't worked (it) out we have them (tell us) why, (than) tell me what's going on. Have we helped you?" Later, he stated that occasionally it is "...having a meeting with the teachers just to air out the differences and work it out, or we'll go, they'll do workshops on co-teaching or they visit model classrooms to see how it is in practice."

In rare cases the administration will move a teacher if they are not cooperating with their partners. Mr. Adkins declared, "If you're a cooperating teacher, you have to settle your differences. You have to, but in some cases it doesn't work, and yes, in some cases it's just been that bad where you actually have to move a teacher." Mr. Adams supported this practice by stating, "If it doesn't work...we've broken them up. We've separated teachers, and it was no fault of their own, but it was just the chemistry.... Then placed in other settings they did well, but together they didn't click."

Ms. Andrews insinuated that a number of the district level supports for co-teaching have been removed. One such support was the inclusion specialist: This persons job was to ensure that teachers are in compliance with the various special education laws. Additionally, he or she would visit various classrooms to ensure that co-teaching was

being implemented properly. Without the inclusion specialists many of the district level supervisors were charged with the responsibility of monitoring co-taught classes. Ms. Andrews stated, “For years we've had what they call an inclusion specialist, and they would go in and work with the two teachers, and provide support of how to differentiate instruction, as well as how do each of them function?” She continued by stating, “My role from the district level is to go in and work with those two teachers.”

In a different interview, Ms. Andrews discussed the need for support visits. Due to the fact that she is a district level supervisor for three different schools, it makes it difficult for her to know what is happening on a daily basis in the classroom. Therefore, she will do what is known as a 15 minute support visit. During this visit, she will examine how the classroom is structured and which teachers have adopted certain roles. After which, she will come back with certain suggestions for the co-teaching partners. She stated, “I'll go in to a classroom and do a support visit, which basically means sometimes just going to see what's going on, like a 15, 10 minute visit, you can see the kids that are floating to only one teacher.” She continued by suggesting that the students “...might be floating to one and not the other. One might be vocalizing in a negative manner, and the kids are not going to that person. You can always tell when something's not working, who they're drifting to.”

Mr. Gates suggested that the support at the school was sufficient; however, he preferred to keep his issues with his co-teacher between the two of them and try to handle it within the classroom. He goes on to state:

If I ever had a problem, I'm sure I could go to whomever I need to go to.

Principals, supervisors, whatever it may be. But for the most part, I really haven't

had a problem. And if there is, I'd rather just handle it myself. I'm a doer. I like to get stuff done myself. I don't have a problem with the support. I think the support here is fine. I just like to handle a lot of my business myself and keep it inside.

One participant suggested that the biggest issue with support is the administrations' inability to gather input from the teachers. Ms. Gifford implied that the administration assumes that everything is functioning properly between the co-teaching partners. She stated, "In my opinion, I don't see anybody questioning how it's working. No one's asked us if it's working; no one's come to us to say, Oh, what are you (doing)? how is it working? What's going on with you guys?" She concluded this thought by stating:

So they're just assuming that you make it work. It's your job to make it work.

And if it doesn't work, when it finally breaks down to the nth degree where you just are butting heads, then one of you are gonna have to feel like you have to go to the office and say, 'I can't do this anymore. I can't work with him or her. Now you know it's not working.'

With regards to listening to the teachers as one form of support, Ms. Samuels insinuated that the administration does listen to the teachers. However, most of their concerns fall on deaf ears. She states, "I think they're open to hearing if a lot of people might disagree with their positions, if they're inclusion or whatever and I think they're very open to hear you. Do I think that it's always listened to? No." She concludes this thought by explaining, "I think it's, they hear you but actions are not in place, they're



really not considering what you would like. They .... I don't know....use their judgment of what they feel you would be best in.”

Among all of the participants, Ms. Simpson revealed the only tangible method in which the administration attempts to support teachers who are in co-taught classes. She acknowledged that the administration would occasionally provide the teachers with books on co-teaching. She goes on to say, “ We've received books. Sometimes they give us resources that we can use to (solve problems) on our own, you know, books to read through and to like (share), books about collaboration and things like that.”

### **Is Professional Development the Answer?**

Teachers at John H. Brown face a number of issues with respect to co-teaching, some of those issues have been discussed in this study. Many of the issues have yet to be discovered by researchers. Keeping this in mind, teachers at John H. Brown wanted solutions to some of the common issues. All of the teachers stated that if the administration wants teachers to solve their own problems, then they should provide some kind of professional development opportunities.

Professional development is understood as an opportunity given to a teacher to enhance their skills in a specific area. These opportunities could be in the form of teachers meeting with an outside consultant, a web based activity, or a meeting with a district level specialist (inclusion specialist). These are only a few of the different types of professional development opportunities. It is also important to acknowledge that the terms *professional development* and *workshop* are used interchangeably within the transcripts; nevertheless, they mean the same thing. Teachers saw professional development as the answer to many of the problems embedded in co-taught classrooms.

Teachers made comments such as “well you know that were not gonna get any help on co-teaching here... so we need to seek help outside.”

Overall, teachers were not given opportunities to enhance their skills in co-taught classrooms. The administration suggested that professional development focused on co-teaching was a waste of time. This infuriated most of the staff, because they wanted and opportunity to sharpen their skills as professionals. When presented with a request to attend professional development opportunities focused on co-teaching, the administration would often stall until it was too late.

The administration stated that co-teaching centered professional development was unfair. The school is failing the state standardized tests in the areas of language arts and mathematics. The administrations overall philosophy was, “Why am I going to send a teacher out on a workshop when they need to be in the classroom... we’re failing!” If the administration was going to send a teacher out for a workshop it would be in the areas of language arts or math.

During my time at John H. Brown teachers ultimately understood professional development or workshops as an opportunity to get to know one co-teaching partner outside the confines of the school. Teachers stated that stronger bonds could be created between teachers if they were given the opportunity to attend team-building workshops. These workshops would be centered on developing real visceral relationships with one’s co-teaching partner. Throughout this section of the study, teachers and administrators disagree, in how they perceive the availability of professional development opportunities.

Mr. Adkins suggested that both he and the district offer, “. . . tons of them (workshops), but it's almost . . . they're repetitive.” He believes that many of the

workshops offered are old and outdated. He also insinuated that most of the teachers feel that the workshops are useless. Many of these workshops do not address the needs of co-taught classes. He concludes this thought by stating, “Things have to be new. You have to stay on top of the times. Therefore they should have workshops, professional development, that actually addresses the needs of this particular population of teachers.” Keeping with this thought, Ms. Andrews stated, “The professional development used to be district run, but now it's really on the school because the school has their own professional development plan where they really want to see what are their strengths and weaknesses.”

She continued, suggesting that teachers who implement proper co-teaching techniques should give workshops. She explained, “Some of my principals actually use teams that work well together, and they ask them to facilitate a workshop. We have some workshops that run during the summer. We have some that run during the year. It's on a school-by-school level.”

More than half of the teachers interviewed in this study saw the need for professional development opportunities centered on co-teaching. However, half of the teachers implied that the administration, both building level and district level, did not offer workshops on co-teaching. Mr. Gates affirmed this notion by explaining, “There's been support in the past, but I don't think... you got to do a lot of the stuff on your own. And whatever you need to work on with your co-teacher, you have to work on your own doing.” He concluded this thought by stating, “I don't think I've been to a workshop on co-teaching.” Mr. Shannon supported this notion by stating, “When I first started teaching, there was no support (for co-teaching)... There were workshops for math

(only).” In the same interview he revisited this idea and stated, “There are models. But in terms of, ‘Okay, you can do it like this or like that,’ they’ll tell you, but there’s nothing specifically that you can view, let’s say, that’d be ideal to watch.” In a separate interview, Mr. Smith followed this idea by stating, “There’s no real information, like you need to get along and how to get along with your co teacher.” Ms. Stevens stated, “I’ve never like seen like people get together and say, ‘Look, this is how you co-teach.’ ‘This is how we do it.’ Not really.” Lastly, Ms. Sanders stated that on rare occasions there will be “...a meeting and like our principal will say those of you that are in co-teaching positions make sure you’re sharing the work or sharing the load or this. But as for as a work shop where you’re working together, no.”

Among the unsatisfied teachers was Ms. Samuels. She was able to recall when her administrators sent her to a workshop on co-teaching several years ago. She suggested that the workshop was centered on teachers accepting that they both have an active role. She explained, “We had a workshop with co-teaching and (it was about) the same thing that both teachers need to have an active role and so we are given workshops based on that. Probably not enough”

Ms. Stevens implied that the district, at one time, did put together a few workshops on co-teaching, but they were not memorable. She also insinuated that the administration only constructed these workshops because the district hired a large number of special education teachers. This also implies that the district’s stance on co-teaching is “...only the special education teachers need that information ... not the general education.” She goes on to say, “I can’t remember the last time...if at all...that I went to a workshop for special ed (co-teaching).” She concluded this thought by stating:

I know that we get books, but who really sits down and that's what they want to read? You'll thumb through it and pick out things that you need, but workshops in it? No. Workshops in co-teaching? Maybe my first year, and like I said, they hired a lot of special ed teachers that year, so maybe that's why they did that. But no, I don't think there is a lot of support.

In a different interview, Mr. Shannon suggested that the administration should provide teachers with an opportunity to build a relationship before being thrown into a classroom together. Perhaps in the form of an obstacle course, puzzle, or building a physical structure. He calls his idea "team building workshops." He states:

You come in, you're both teachers, yet you know, you're still kind of wet behind the ears In terms of how, what each person's going to do. Something like team building workshops (would be helpful), where the two people go in, solve an obstacle course, go through this, you know....allows this....allows the co-teachers to develop something (a bond)... you put two people in a course that builds their ability to work together, then you develop your moment, and that develops a memory. And developing your memory develops (a relationship).

Staying with the theme of professional development opportunities, Ms. Gifford implied that the few district workshops that she has attended have been centered on how to treat your co-teaching partner, not what to do if they are absent. She explained, "I've gone to a couple of workshops when we've had district-wide staff development on co-teaching, but as far as what to do when that classroom teacher is out (or) the resource room teacher is out – how to handle that?, nothing specific (was taught)." She goes on to say, "I think the district has done more through professional development to make it

clearer that they're (special education teacher) not like the second-class teacher. They're not supposed to take the backseat to you (general education teacher)."

In a similar line of thinking, Ms. Stevens suggested that workshops are needed within the district to help co-teaching partners understand how to deal with conflict. She calls this "...rolling with the punches." She stated that it is important to have workshops on "...how to co-teach, how to work equally. I don't think everyone is as roll-with-the-punches as I am, so I think coming into the situation it's difficult to work with another teacher, and try to contribute as much as they are." She concluded this thought by stating, "I definitely think that there should be workshops regularly, because we're special ed." In a similar vein, Ms. Sanders stated, "I think it's important (co-teaching workshops), especially for like new co-teaching positions or new people that are working together. And people with kind of older mentality that aren't as open or receptive to co teaching."

With regards to professional development, Ms. Gifford suggested that it is a great tool to help teachers learn the basics, but ultimately it is up to the teacher to figure it out on their own. She states:

The practical part, I think, as with anything in teaching, the professional development only takes you so far and then for the rest you're kind of left on your own to figure it out with yourself and the other teacher. I think we do more of that than anything that we get as far as professional development gives us.

### **Why are Teacher's Schedules Important?**

Embedded in the topic of administration is the idea of scheduling. In the field of k-12 education, the administration has the ultimate power over the teachers' schedules. The term *schedule* was defined as the instructional positions assigned to teachers. During

this study, participants highlighted the notion of scheduling several times and how scheduling affected the co-teaching dynamic within the middle school. When asked what the biggest issue in co-teaching is, Mr. Adams responded by saying, “It’s, basically, for me .... it’s the scheduling.” Overall, teachers at John H. Brown stated that their schedules were unfair and the administration did not keep strong co-teaching teams together. This affected the overall morale of the teachers at John H. Brown. Many of them made statements like “why should I get to know my co-teaching partner, if we are working well together.... Their just gonna split us up anyway.”

Eight teachers in this study alluded to the fact that the administration does not consider the needs of the teachers or the needs of co-taught classes in the middle school when making their decisions. The number one issue presented by all of the teachers with regards to scheduling was the pairing of teachers. Teachers did not feel like their input was valued when it came to working with another teacher. Furthermore, teachers knew that they could not pick their partners. They just wanted to have a voice in the process. They wanted the freedom to share their opinion and make the administration aware of solid co-teaching teams.

With regards to scheduling, the administration often faced two questions; Should I do what is best for the students? Or should I do what is best for the co-teaching partners in that classroom? These are tough questions to answer because all decisions must be in the interest of the students. However, what if what is best for the students is what is best for the co-teaching partners? What does the administration do when they have an excellent team and students are learning? Do they break them up or keep them together?

During her interview, Ms. Simpson suggested that the administration puts “no thought” behind the pairing of teachers. It frustrates her because some “...co-teaching teams do work; yet, they are split up.” She goes on to say, “I didn’t get any explanation as to why they moved us. I don’t know if there’s a real rhyme or reason to it, but it is frustrating because every year I have a good year or a bad year.” She concluded this thought by stating, “Whatever it is (my co-teaching relationship), I can’t even build from that, you know. It’s always starting from scratch.”

Mr. Adams opposed the notion that the administration puts “no thought” behind the pairing of teachers. He believes that the administration tries their best to accommodate teachers. In many cases the administration does examine personalities when making their decisions. He explained, “We try to team people with like (personalities) you almost have to look and say, you look at your general ed roster, you look at your special ed and you say, ‘Well, who's going to work best with each other?’” Indirectly, he insinuated that the administration looks for bad teachers to pair them with good teachers, in the hopes that the good teachers will influence the bad ones. You have to consider if “...one (teachers) a slacker and one (teacher) takes no nonsense...if you put those two together, (will) the one (teacher) that takes no nonsense whip the slacker into shape.”

In a later interview, Mr. Adams revisited the idea of scheduling. He suggested that for “180 days (teachers are) going to work with each other, (in some cases) they're going to see each other more than they may be with their spouses, say, and so it's hard.” He concludes this thought by stating, “So you need to see which personalities click, what



teaching styles each of your teachers have so you could play off each other's strengths and support the other's weaknesses... Sometimes we get a good mix”

During an interview with Ms. Gifford, she discussed how strong her relationship was with her co-teaching partner of 2 years. Towards the end of that interview she was asked, “Do you think your going to work with her again?” She answered, “I’ve not worked with the same inclusion teacher 2 years in a row. So I doubt that I’ll work with her. One of the things that the building tends to do is they tend to move the teachers.” She concluded this thought by stating, “It’s difficult for the teachers. I mean again, they (administration) don’t really care about us as much as what’s best for the students. Sometimes I don’t always think it’s good for the students. It depends.” Ms. Gifford suggested that this is a flawed practice and consistency is more productive. She explained, “If I come back next year and I have the same co-teacher, we’re jumping right into what we were doing, we know what already worked for us and we can build on that.”

According to Ms. Gifford, switching teachers around destroys team teaching because teachers never get the opportunity to learn each other’s styles and personalities. She used the term “honeymoon” to describe the period in which teachers are getting to know each other. She suggested that switching teachers around keeps them forever in a honeymoon period. She later explained:

I generally don’t see full team teaching happening anywhere, and part of it is that, again, each year we have different people being partnered. They haven’t kept the same teams together consistently. So just as you’d start to develop that rapport and people start defining their roles and working together, the year ends; and a new year starts and now you’re assigned someone else to work with. So I feel

like you're always in that honeymoon period of getting used to each other and knowing how we can best both work together.

Ms. Samuels insinuated that some of the scheduling changes are also based on grade level. In some instances, teachers are moved from one grade to another because they are a strong co-teacher. Yet, these changes are often abrupt and they usually cause the teacher to become sour. Ms. Samuels stated, "If you're comfortable with the grade level or the material that you're teaching then you're gonna be more positive. You're gonna have a better outlook." She goes on to state, "if you're teaching a grade that you don't want to be teaching ...then (you're) probably gonna have a negative....not negative but like it's gonna be a harder time." Ms. Simpson supported this idea by stating, "I've gone from 6th to 8th to 6th to 7th, you know, back and forth and .... which is a bit frustrating because it's really hard to have some type of mastery on one grade level when it's always changing."

Half of the teachers interviewed directly stated that the administration did not care about their input with regards to scheduling and the pairing of teachers. When asked if the administration values the input of the teachers Ms. Simpson responded by saying,

(You can try to speak to them) it doesn't mean they listen. At the end of the year, they ask questions, I certainly tell them how I feel, but at the end of the day they still make their decisions for whatever reason.

It seems as though teachers were unable to understand why the administration would not hear their concerns. Ms. Simpson stated, "You know if I come to you (administrator) and I say this is really working out, we have a good thing, I don't know why they wouldn't want to keep those two people together, you know?"

In a later interview, Ms. Simpson suggested that many of the problems with co-teaching stem from scheduling, which is ultimately the responsibility of the administration. She affirms this thought by stating, “Again the whole moving thing and the lack of consistency which does come from our administration... I think that’s the biggest issue with why team teaching or collaborative teaching doesn’t always work.”

### **Perspectives Toward Collaborative Co-Teaching**

Among all of the themes discussed thus far, collaboration seems to be the catalyst for successful co-teaching teams. Throughout this study participants highlighted the idea of collaboration in their understanding of co-teaching. Within the parameters of this study collaboration is the process in which two or more individuals work together to achieve a common goal. When asked to explain what co-teaching is, most participants suggested that it is two people in a classroom working together to teach a heterogeneous group of children. However, as discussed earlier, co-teaching does not always mean that the teachers are working collaboratively. The prefix “*co*” really means two, equals, mutual, or common; it does not mean to work jointly. Even with this being the case, many participants defined co-teaching as two teachers collaborating.

When asked to define co-teaching, Mr. Adkins stated, “For the most part I think there is a collaborative approach.” Ms. Andrews stated, “It’s two people having a common goal to work with all the children, and using each other’s strengths to lead the classroom to success.” Mr. Gates stated, “Co-teaching, also called team-teaching, you have two people in the room. It’s two people that are able to work together and feed off of each other.” Essentially, all of the participants pointed to collaboration as the number one factor driving co-teaching.

Participants underscored two primary components of collaboration, planning and discipline. Participants suggested that these two components were among the most important factors that teachers needed to discuss in their classrooms. Participants alluded to the notion that true collaboration could not exist if these factors were not addressed.

### **Disjointed Planning**

Within the field of k-12 education, planning is seen as an essential component of good teaching. Teachers are required to keep plan books that contain lessons for each week. Lessons must be written with detail, chronicling what will be taught and the method in which it will be taught. Administrators are then required to periodically review teachers lesson plans to ensure that they are attempting to maintain some sort of structure. Teachers who are part of co-taught classrooms should ideally plan lessons and student activities together. Teachers within this study saw planning as a vital collaborative component of co-teaching. A number of issues present themselves when teachers do not plan their lessons together.

Teachers at John H. Brown saw planning as the foundation of successful co-teaching teams. Many of the teachers assumed that planning should take place during, before, and after school. However, during my time at John H. Brown, co-teaching partners did not spend a great deal of time on planning.

Each co-taught team was structured differently with regards to roles and responsibilities. However, one fact remained true for most of the co-teaching teams; only one person constructed the plan for the class. On average teachers did not consult their partners on what needed to be taught and how it should be taught. Often one partner would say to the other “here you go ... this is what we are doing for the week.”

In almost every co-taught classroom, the general education teacher wrote the plans for both the general education and special education students. Only in rare cases did the special education teacher provide any type of input. Overall, special education teachers allowed this practice to occur because many of them did not want to write lesson plans for four different subjects. The general education teachers did not care about writing the plans for both sets of students because they wanted to remain in control. The only changes that the special education teacher would add to the plans were modifications and accommodations. Additionally, all teachers stated that shared planning was difficult because teachers had different preparation periods.

Teachers at John H. Brown consistently made contradictory comments regarding planning. As stated earlier, many teachers believe that cohesive planning is the hallmark of a solid co-teaching team. Conversely, when I asked teachers how often they sat down with their partners to plan, almost all of the teachers said that they never plan with their partner or that the planning that does occur is inconsistent.

Throughout this study administrators insinuated that co-teaching partners should plan their lessons together, if co-teaching is to be successful. Ms. Andrews suggested that, "Two people are suppose to sit down" and plan the lessons together. For example "...if you have a social studies lesson, and you have economics, you're supposed to come up with that plan for the week together." She continued by saying, "...when it works well, the special education teacher is the one that's going to be doing the modifications and accommodations of the assignment" in addition to incorporating their own ideas about what should be taught.

Ms. Andrews stated that if the special education teacher was only responsible for the modifications and accommodations, there is an underlining power struggle that must exist between the co-teaching partners. In some instances this is true because the general education teacher is not allowing the special education teacher to provide any input with regards to what needs to be taught. “If you’re in a power struggle situation, the special education teacher strictly does the modifications and accommodations. A lot of times that special education teacher is being put to the side.”

In a later interview, Ms. Andrews reminisced about how planning was structured between her and her co-teaching partners when she was a classroom teacher. She explained, “I know my co-teacher and I actually did sit down, as a grade level.” She goes on to say, “What we would do is, the general education teachers would often sit together, look at the curriculum, and I would come in and take a look and see where it’s going to work and where it’s not going to work.”

In a different interview, Mr. Adams stated that many of the general education teachers emailed their special education partners the lesson plans. When asked if he thinks this is “real collaborative planning” he responded by saying, “No, my face is red, (you want to believe that) they’re on the up-and-up, but that’s (not the case).” Mr. Adams suggested that collaboration is often reflected in one’s lesson plans.

Over half of the participants stated that both the special education teacher and the general education teacher should create the plan together. Mr. Gates stated, “I feel like if I’m teaching by myself, it’s one thing. I know the material. I could just go off it. I think with a co-teacher, you kind of need to have a plan on who does what.” He later stated, “I usually consult the person (co-teaching partner), especially on the inclusion students.”

In addition to lesson plans, teachers sometimes sit with each other to informally discuss what needs to be done in the classroom. One participant suggested that this type of planning is an essential part of co-teaching; however, teacher's schedules prevent them from meeting consistently. Mr. Shannon stated that planning is sporadic; most teachers within the middle school do not have a chance to get together and plan because their preparation periods are all different. So, teachers usually try to meet during their lunch or before school. Mr. Shannon explained, "It used to be we all had the same lunchtime. So sixth, seventh, and eight grade teachers had the same lunchtime, and we were able to like almost kind of (set up a conference in) the lunchroom." According to participants, teachers who made the effort to meet with their co-teaching partners had a stronger relationship than teachers who let planning happen organically.

When asked how planning is structured, Mr. Shannon stated, "Difficult. In the sense that it was hard to plan and harder to implement." He goes on to state, "You had to do lesson plans for math and language arts. For science and social studies, you had to get together with the science teacher and the social studies teacher, and a lot of times our preps didn't match." Ms. Simpson supported this idea by explaining that one of her co-teaching assignments is "...only 45 minutes and (she) only sees her (partner) once a week (therefore), it's hard to sit and actually come up with a lesson together. So, it's more like supporting."

Participants also alluded to the notion that planning was difficult because there were too many teachers to plan with and there were too many ancillary meetings that teachers needed to attend. Ms. Simpson stated, "If you're dealing with four teachers and we have other morning meetings and other things we have to meet for, there's special ed

meetings, committee meetings, what have you, we don't always necessarily have common planning time.”

Keeping with this idea, Ms. Samuels alluded to the notion that a number of the teachers that she works with do not plan with her whether it is formally or informally. When asked the question, “What types of conversations do her and her co-teaching partners have?” she responded by stating “Minimal. Like I really don't plan with them (general education teacher) in the aspects of what's being taught. I know they normally set out the plan for the week.” She goes on to say, “a lot of the planning's done by them (general education teacher). I just go in and try to modify work that needs to be modified for the students.” She concluded this thought by stating, “There really isn't much like okay, what do you want to teach today and we'll plan it out that way.”

Throughout this study only three participants were able to describe what they discussed with their co-teaching partners with regards to planning. None of the descriptions involved a great amount of detail. The responses were usually vague. Ms. Gibbons attempted to illustrate what her and her co-teaching partner discussed. She stated, “We discuss what we're going to do for the week, what projects are going to come up, tests that are going to come up.”

### **Unified Classroom Management Techniques.**

Within this study, student discipline seemed to be highly valued by the participants at this school. The idea of student discipline has been mentioned a number of times throughout the transcripts. With regards to collaboration, participants suggested that co-teaching partners should discuss their discipline policies prior to students entering



their classroom. Discussions on discipline primarily focused on what roles the co-teachers adopted or what rules cannot be broken.

Teachers at John H. Brown suggested that both instructional staff members needed to adopt similar discipline philosophies if co-teaching is expected to work. In general, teachers at John H. Brown all had the same discipline philosophy, fair and firm. The only glitch that presented itself was the lack of respect that the students had for the special education teachers. This baffled both teachers because, with regards to discipline, the general education teachers valued their partners. Therefore, the students should respect the special education teachers because of the general education teacher's influence. This lack of respect from students can lead to covert tension between the co-teaching partners.

More than half of the participants (11 out of 13) understood the need for consistency in the classroom with regards to discipline. The other two participants did not understand the question; therefore, they did not give an answer. Ms. Andrews stated, "I feel that when the teachers are together 8 hours a day, there has to be some collaboration on discipline." She later stated that when both teachers discuss their correction methods "...there seems to be less of a discipline problem."

Ms. Gibbons suggested that all of the teachers in co-taught classrooms discipline their students, and having two disciplinarians helps the day to run smooth. Ms. Gibbons goes on to state that when teachers sit down and discuss discipline methods, there are less issues in the classroom. She says:

We'll all discipline. There's not one particular teacher that just handles discipline; all of us will discipline the kids. But it seems that the kids are not as out of control

as if there was one teacher in the room. So having two teachers' benefits, and having three teachers' benefits with discipline.

Over half of the participants stated that most discipline policies were discussed informally. Teachers rarely schedule sessions to discuss discipline, even though it is one of the most important factors to them with regards to collaboration.

Ms. Stevens suggested that general education teachers perform most of the discipline. This usually occurs because the general education teachers fail to discuss how discipline will be structured in the classroom. Ms. Stevens viewed this act as a lack of respect for the special education teachers. Participants suggested that this lack of communication was associated with the nomadic nature of the special education teachers. Ms. Stevens explained:

I think in general, with co-teaching, that the general ed teacher tends to discipline more, because for the most part and maybe this is my fault, in my situation, but I think it's true in a lot of situations .... that the general ed (teacher and students) don't necessarily respect the special ed teacher as much. That person is not in the room as much. The general ed teacher is there with them (the students) all day, and I think that the special ed teacher doesn't always get the respect that they should.

### **Productivity Model as a Justification for Co-teaching**

As stated in chapter II, productivity is the ratio of outputs divided by the input resources, such as labor and capital. Outputs are essentially goods and services, which range from diverse items such as improved judicial systems to education. A number of researchers use the productivity model as a justification for the existence of co-taught

classrooms. Researchers suggest that by placing two teachers in a classroom and adhering to students IEPs, students will have greater educational opportunities. Essentially, this idea means, “Two are better than one.” Throughout this study, participants discussed a number of factors that developed from the concept of productivity. These ideas include co-teaching models, two are better than one, use of resources, and tri-teaching. Some of these concepts were not directly connected to the idea of productivity, however they did emerge organically within many of the interviews. Therefore, it is safe to say that these concepts are associated with the notion of productivity

### **Two are Better than One**

During my time at John H. Brown, both teachers and administrators insinuated that co-teaching is one of the greatest features of k-12 education. Participants insinuated that two teachers in a classroom benefits both the students and the instructional staff. According to staff members, co-teaching enables teachers to divide the workload, take mental breaks to avoid burn out, individualize instruction, and correct student behavior more efficiently.

Teachers who were in classrooms by themselves complained about being lonely; many of them suggested that it was unfair that certain rooms had two teachers. Mr. Smith began this discussion by suggesting, “It’s a lot easier when you have two people in a class, because it’s hard to watch the whole class when you’re one person.”

Ms. Andrews suggested that two teachers in a classroom decreases the number of at-risk students. She stated that when “...two teachers (are) in the classroom, those two teachers are going to make sure that child succeeds when they’re doing their job correctly.” Normally “...that child would be deemed at risk when there's one teacher and

25 other students, but in a team teaching situation, that child will be caught, given the support that they need.”

In a different interview, Ms. Andrews reinforced the idea of productivity by suggesting that placing two teachers in a classroom increases tests scores and decreases the number of discipline issues. She goes on to say, “I would bet my career on it, the number of referrals in that classroom are slim to none. The scores are going up or the interventions that are used (are going up).” In a different interview, Mr. Gates confirmed this idea by stating, “it’s tough to be the disciplinarian all the time so I mean, it’s actually kinda good to have you know, someone else who’s not afraid.”

Mr. Adams extended this idea by stating, “The purpose of them being in a co-teaching setting is to bring more of the students up to their proper levels.” In a separate interview Mr. Adkins supported this idea and indicated, “...with two teachers in a room, there should be no margin for error.”

Participants also insinuated that some general education and special education teachers prefer co-taught classes and were upset when they were not assigned a co-teaching partner. Ms. Andrews stated, “Teachers have kind of gotten spoiled now. They want, they expect to have an inclusion teacher now. They expect to have that other body.” She concluded this idea by stating, “...sometimes when they don't (get a partner), they actually fight to get the special education teacher, whereas years ago, they would sit there and say, ‘I don't want that person.’” In a different interview, Mr. Adkins confirmed this idea by stating, “I honestly think there's some (teachers) that actually welcome an extra set of hands, an extra set of eyes, someone to obtain some knowledge from.” Mr. Smith stated, “It’s a lot easier to be in a classroom with two teachers rather than one

teacher...that's why I think the general ed teachers most of the time, they're thankful that they have a special ed teacher in there." Ms. Sanders promotes this idea by stating, "I love working with another teacher. I love being able to collaborate. I love having someone to bounce ideas off of." Additionally she suggested that having another teacher in the classroom with her allowed her to take mental breaks from demanding students.

She explained:

If the student's (are) getting to me, its nice to kind of be like, 'okay you need to work with this student for a little bit' Now I need a break from this one, I'll go work over here. So I like the give and the take and the sharing (of the students).

Four participants indirectly supported the notion that an extra pair of hands helps when trying to complete projects and large assignments. Mr. Shannon stated, "It's great to have an extra pair of eyes and the help is awesome." Mr. Gates stated, "It's good to have another adult in the room, especially if you're playing games and having an enjoyable experience with the classroom." In addition to providing assistance with projects, two teachers in a room will sometimes give ideas to one another during lessons. In a later interview, Mr. Gates stated, "I think it's easy also to throw back ideas...Sometimes it's better to have two heads." Keeping with this theme Ms. Gibbons stated, "another 'idea person' in the room (is great) because sometimes you get up there and you're like oh, what am I going to do today? Well they're like oh, why don't we do this? And I'm like oh, that's great."

Mr. Adams indicated that with two teachers in a classroom, the workload gets cut in half. This is especially helpful in subjects like language arts. He suggested that in language arts "...you get two readers, you get two scorers, so I think there is a shared

responsibility. I think it's almost .... I would say it's divided equally.” Ms. Gibbons expanded this thought by stating, “...it’s nice to work with somebody, you don’t feel like the pressure’s all on one person and you can share in the responsibilities of everything that goes on within the classroom.” Ms. Sanders explained that “When you have someone to share all the mundane stuff with it makes you free to have a lot more fun with the actual assignments in the classroom and the students.”

Within this section, participants also pointed out that some individuals outside the realm of education might view co-teaching as a waste of resources. Why are two people doing a job that could be done by one person? Participants were very passionate about defending the practice of co-teaching. Both teachers and administrators indicated that individuals outside the arena of education only see numbers, they don’t see the one on one help that students receive when there are two teachers in a classroom. Mr. Adams stated that a number of individuals removed from teaching make comments such as “Oh, look; there's two bodies in a classroom." Not realizing the purpose of that person. “That's \$100,000.00, where you could get rid of one and save, you know, save salaries." But there's a lot more to it.” Ms .Gibbons defended co-teaching by explaining, “...the kids benefit the most from this, having two educated people in a classroom teaching them.”

Mr. Shannon stated that there was a logical reason why some individuals saw co-teaching as a waste of resources. He goes on to say “...sometimes it would be viewed as a waste of resources if most of the time one teacher’s drifting and one teacher’s teaching. Then you could say it’s viewed as a waste of resources because you have one person who’s sitting.” He concludes this thought by stating:

Just sitting on the side, telling kids to be quiet or whatever. Or just sitting on the side, while the other teacher is teaching (is a waste of resources). You know? You've got to give that teacher an active role. But within the curriculum, there's hardly room for an active role for that other teacher. You know? Like, the math ...just, often is scripted so much that only one teacher teaches it unless you parallel teach.

In a separate interview Mr. Smith insinuated that placing two teachers in a classroom helps the staff contend with emergencies. Humans will always have emergencies or situations that require immediate attention. Within most industries, employees can make emergency phone calls or leave their workstation to use the restroom. However, within the field of k-12 education, it becomes difficult to deal with most emergencies because teachers have groups of students for whom they are responsible. If a teacher is ill, they are not allowed to leave their class to use the rest room. Usually the procedure is; call the main office, wait for a secretary, the secretary must then look for a substitute teacher, then that substitute teacher reports to the classroom, and only then may the teacher leave to attend to their emergency. Mr. Smith stated:

I worked with a teacher who really never had a co-teaching partner. And the biggest thing with her was (using the bathroom). She would have to go to the bathroom sometimes and you can't leave the class unattended. So she'd be like .... that's the biggest thing! If I need to run out to the bathroom real quick, there's another teacher in here. Like you can't run out to the bathroom and leave

the class alone. God forbid something happens, and you're in the bathroom. A kid gets hurt?

### **What Are the Best Co-Teaching Models?**

During this study participants discussed a number of issues surrounding the theme of productivity. As participants answered questions related to productivity they began to reflect on the different co-teaching models that were introduced to them. Participants discussed the pros and cons of many of the co-teaching models. In addition, participants highlighted the models that work best for them. Currently, there are six widely accepted co-teaching models; these models were reviewed in great detail in chapter II. Overall teachers and administrators preferred team-teaching to any other co-teaching method. Participants suggested that team-teaching ensures that both teachers are being used to their fullest capacity.

Mr. Adkins suggested that most of the co-teaching models that are used in classrooms are a waste of time because there is always one person doing more work than the other. He also insinuated that teachers should adjust what co-teaching model they are using to meet the needs of the students they are servicing. He stated, "the teaching style doesn't depend on the teachers; it depends on the needs of the students. I feel that as a teacher, the best way is parallel teaching, hands down." He continued by stating, "I'm not a big fan of one teach, one observe. Not at all. To me, that is the biggest waste of money in the classroom."

In a later interview, Mr. Adkins proposed that during the honeymoon stage, co-teaching teams in the middle school usually begin with one teach, one observe. Teachers feel most comfortable with this style because no one is being stifled and the relationship



has room to evolve. He supports this theory by stating, “In the middle school, I think it begins, always with the one teach, one observe, and then I truly think that it goes into the station or parallel teaching, and your alternative teaching.”

Ms. Andrews discussed the districts plan for co-taught classroom. Ideally, the district and the administration would like to see team teaching occur in every classroom. Team teaching ensures that no one is being placed in an assistant’s role. She states, “I think in this district, the goal is, we want both teachers having input in the classroom on a daily basis. We want them to differentiate instruction. We want them to use each other's strengths and weaknesses.” Aside from co-teaching, one of the most affective methods of achieving equal input and equal participation from both instructors is station teaching. According to Ms. Andrews, the only issue with this style is that it “takes a lot of planning, because they really have to be on point when it comes to the content and the direction of the lesson for that day.”

Other interviews suggest that a great deal of co-teaching depends on the two teachers working together. What works for one team, may not work for another team. Ms. Andrews supports this thought by arguing that, among the co-teaching styles, one-teach one-observe did not work for any set of teachers. Ms. Andrews believes that this style is a complete waste of resources and the teacher who usually drift is the special education teacher. She supports this notion by stating:

One teacher, one drift doesn't work at all. The only time I truly see that working is when the both of them are held accountable. A lot of times, my frustrations as an administrator is the one teach, one drift, because often times, to be honest, the

Mr. Shannon stated that the best co-teaching style was not team-teaching; rather it was parallel teaching. He assumed that this style was the best because it allowed both teachers to add something to the scripted lessons provided by the district. Mr. Shannon goes on to say, "...the math .... just often is scripted so much that only one teacher teaches it unless you parallel teach. You know?" He completed this thought by stating, "A lot of times, parallel teaching works. Yeah, you break the kids up into two small groups and both of them are teaching .... that's what .... that's kind of what the approach we're having now..." In a different interview Mr. Gallons supported Mr. Shannons claim by suggesting that parallel teaching allows the teachers to "get into differentiated teaching. If it doesn't slow one group down, you can split the teachers. We're still teaching the same concept, but one is teaching it at a lower, slower pace and not holding back the other students."

Most participants agreed with every method except one-teach, one-drift. Mr. Adams offered an opposing view on this subject. Mr. Adams suggested that one-teach one-drift is a fairly effective method in the middle school. If it is done properly, both teachers have the opportunity to instruct the students. He states:

From what I've seen the one, one teach, one drift, (is most prevalent in the middle school). However, with that being said, it's not the same person teaching all the time. There's a constant trade-off. And that way you get, you establish both teachers have control, master the class, and if your expertise is in math, you teach math. I drift or I'll teach a language; you drift. You know, it's, I feel that (this style is) more practical and most effective.

Mr. Adams supported this idea because team-teaching does not always work due to teacher's personalities. He states:

Team teaching is ideal, but again, you need to have matching personalities. It's .... a lot goes into, a lot into consideration. That is the ideal, the team-teach, were both teachers are teaching at the same time. it's generally the most successful in the primary... elementary; not in the middle school.

Ms. Samuels confirmed Mr. Adams thoughts about team-teaching by suggesting that team-teaching is too difficult to execute in the middle school because some of the special education teachers are not familiar with the content being taught. She stated:

In the middle school, it's a lot harder to do the actual team teaching, cause usually when you go into a regular room, the regular ed teacher has a stronger lead. They know what needs to get done. They've been doing it probably for like the second or third time in the day.

Even though it is not the popular opinion, Mr. Adams is not alone with his feelings regarding one-teach, one-drift. Mr. Smith agrees with this style and believes that this style allows him the freedom to work with students one on one. Mr. Smith stated, "A lot of times we do one teach, one drift because the teacher I work with, he enjoys .... he likes just doing the lessons; and I feel my strength is to work one-on-one with students or in a small group."

## Chapter V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This included examining their perspectives about the co-teaching model and the relationships that are formed between co-teachers. Through semi-structured interviews, I collected qualitative data that k-12 administrators can use to implement co-teaching reform at the local level. I structured this study around the following research questions.

1. What roles do co-teachers adopt in inclusive classrooms?
2. What are co-teachers perspectives on administrative support for co-teaching?
  - a. How do teachers' understandings of co-teaching differ from the administration?
  - b. How does administrative opinion matter with what goes on in the classroom?
3. What are co-teachers perspectives of each other's roles?
4. What features of the co-teaching model do teacher's find useful?

This study produced several results that align with concepts from the literature and the John H. Brown School. The results were categorized into the following overarching themes: (a) role ambiguity, (b) role conflict, (c) the structure of co-teaching relationships, and (d) the influence of administrative philosophy on co-teaching. The

conceptual framework used to examine these results was based on theory, research findings and literature.

### **Role Ambiguity**

The term “roles” refers to a set of behavioral expectations associated with a position in a social structure (Beauchamp & Bray, 2001). Teachers within the world of k-12 education assume a variety of roles and responsibilities. In this study I explored the informal roles that teachers adopted in co-teaching teams and how those roles shaped their understanding of co-teaching as a practice.

The results of this study contradict and extend the information available in the current body of literature on co-teaching. The results from this study suggest that the roles in co-taught classrooms are ambiguous at John H. Brown School. Participants did not understand how co-teaching should be structured or how it should be executed. There was not a formal delineation or identification of roles and responsibilities for co-teachers. According to Papastyliauou, Kaila and Polychronopoulos (2009), “Role ambiguity is related to the uncertainty that can arise when the worker does not know what is required of him/her, how these demands will be satisfied and how he/she is expected to behave at work” (p.301). Teachers suggested that their roles changed constantly and that there was no definitive framework for co-teaching.

Data gathered from the John H. Brown school supports and extend the notion in the extant literature that there are four widely accepted dimensions of role ambiguity. Researchers suggested that these parameters or dimensions include: (a) ambiguity of objectives/expectations, (b) ambiguity of processes, (c) ambiguity of priorities, and (d)

ambiguity of behavior (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009).

Objective ambiguity refers to the goals of an organization. Within this dimension of role ambiguity, individuals ask themselves questions like. What should I be doing? What can I do? What do people expect me to do? Special education teachers at John H. Brown indicated that they asked themselves these questions daily. Essentially, the special education teachers had to use their “gut feeling” or instinct to decide what needed to be done for the day and to determine whose responsibility it was to accomplish the tasks. There was not a clear structure or written roles and responsibilities that delineated the duties of the two teachers. Furthermore, several of the special education teachers were confused about what was expected of them. The administration expected them to fill in for absent teachers, attend IEP meetings, and teach special needs students. The general education teachers expected them to help with paper work, escort students around the building, and redirect student behavior. These varying expectations increased the overall role ambiguity of special education teachers (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009).

Procedural ambiguity (ambiguity of process) refers to the process of achieving organizational goals. According to this sub-division, teachers are primarily concerned with the “how” aspect of teaching. For instance, how are things done in this classroom? How are we going to collaborate with different schedules? Special education teachers at Brown school consistently revisited the question, how are things done in this classroom? Each special education teacher’s schedule required him or her to work with at least three different general education teachers. Each general education teacher had a different

method of delivering instruction and differing procedures for maintaining order.

Therefore, it became difficult for the special education teachers to assimilate to each teacher's style (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009). Ultimately, special education co-teachers spent more time learning different teachers' routines and less time servicing special needs students.

General education teachers expressed concerns with the processes of collaboration with their co-teaching partner. Many of them made comments similar to, "how are we expected to work together... you are always called to cover someone." General education teachers were concerned with the frequency in which their special education co-teaching partner was assigned to substitute for an absent teacher. Teachers suggested that this impeded the collaboration process and resulted in the alienation of one of the co-teaching partners (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009).

Priority ambiguity refers to the order in which goals are addressed or what the organization values as most important. The general and special education teachers struggled with priorities. Teachers were caught in a web of diverging opinions regarding co-teaching priorities. According to teachers, the building level administration, central office, the child study team and parents all had different ideas about what was important. (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009). Due to the fact that there was no real system of priorities, teachers found themselves becoming less productive and in certain situations not productive at all, creating a "priority paralysis."

Behavioral ambiguity refers to the way in which people are expected to behave in an organization. At the John H. Brown School, teachers were able to navigate basic

situations that called for certain types of behavior. However, teachers struggled with situations that were more complex. For instance, decisions about who should lead the classroom instruction and management, prompted a number of different behaviors and responses (Beauchamp & Bray 2001; Papastylianou, Kaila & Polychronopoulos, 2009). Student behavioral management between co-teaching partners was dysfunctional because co-teachers did not put forth the effort to learn their partners professional expectations. Both positive and negative co-teaching behaviors occurred organically. Instead of taking control of their behaviors, teachers would let things happen naturally. This sent mixed messages to students because they did not know who to listen to regarding instruction and class management.

Ultimately, co-teaching is a small interdependent team and team members rely on each other to execute certain tasks. However, a team cannot properly function if roles are not clearly identified. The co-teaching system used at John H. Brown is implemented in a way that places teachers into ambiguous situations before they even see students because the processes are ambiguous. (Cook & Friend, 1995; Friend, 2007).

Some industries function using a labor specialization model. Examples include law enforcement, computer engineering, and medical science. In such industries, employees receive a written handbook and training that describes their roles and responsibilities. However, this practice was non-existent at John H. Brown School; essentially teachers improvised their roles and responsibilities each day in co-taught classrooms. The notion that structure dictates function is accepted by some social scientists such as Bolman and Deal (2003). Therefore, one can assume that if an organization has no structure, it is functioning poorly.



The overall role ambiguity that existed caused a considerable mission drift. Co-teachers at John H. Brown School have concerned themselves with a litany of issues that have nothing to do with the primary goals of co-teaching. Co-teaching should be student centered (Cook & Friend, 1995; Friend, 2007). However, the ambiguity that exists within its structure causes teachers to focus on petty issues that should be addressed by the administration. For instance, whose name gets printed on the report cards.

Students are the ones who suffer the most when co-teaching roles are ambiguous. They experience a lack of stability and without a structure in place; students receive two diverging messages from both their teachers. Some participants suggested that students make comments similar to “I don’t know who to ask for help.”

Some researchers and k-12 educators have failed to address the dangers of role ambiguity in co-taught classrooms. The seminal works of Friend, Cook, and Salend all briefly highlight role ambiguity and its impact on co-teaching practices. However, they do not excavate the specific dangers associated with role ambiguity. Additionally, according to participants the staff and administration of the John H. Brown School completely disregarded the concept of role ambiguity.

The consequences of role ambiguity influence both teachers and students. Role ambiguity causes teachers to spend countless hours discussing non-instructional issues such as, “Who’s job is it to take attendance?” These ineffective discussions violate the intended outcomes of production-function theory that co-teaching was built on. According to this theory, placing more teachers in a room will increase educational opportunities for students. When participants were asked (interview) questions related to this theory; they alluded to the notion that it is unreasonable, because what does it matter

if you put five teachers in a room if none of them know what their responsibilities are. The only thing that results from this is more chaos.

### **Recommendations for policy and Practice**

Several of the issues surrounding role ambiguity stem from a lack of organizational structure. Even though schools are not *Fortune 500* companies, school administrators must provide a framework for teachers to operate in co-taught classrooms. This includes a detailed description of roles and responsibilities. The work of German economist and sociologist Max Weber (1930) provides a basic blueprint of what administrators should incorporate in co-taught classrooms. Within his work on organizational bureaucracy, he highlighted the fact that jobs need detailed rights, obligations, responsibilities and scope of authority (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

**Create a List of Common Professional Goals and Responsibilities.** At the beginning of each school year, administrators should facilitate a discussion about and development of a lists of common professional goals among co-teachers. The first section of the list should include general classroom responsibilities, such as who collects the attendance. Who escorts the students to lunch and specials? Who dismisses the class at the end of the day? These few work-related duties are important to discuss in order to avoid major conflict (Salend, 1997).

In addition to general classroom responsibilities, teachers should develop a list that covers specific teaching responsibilities. This list should describe the teaching methods that will be used in the classroom and the ways in which the teachers will address each other in the classroom, as well as the physical arrangement of the room. According to Salend (2007), it is important that co-teaching partners discuss why they

want to work together and agree on the goals they have for their classroom. They need to establish a set of ground rules for collaboration and discuss what they expect from each other, as well as their concerns and fears about working cooperatively.

After creating the initial list, administrators and teachers should meet to see if everyone can come to consensus on the content. It is primarily up to the administration to help parties come to a consensus and then take all of the ideas generated from each of the lists, find commonalities and develop a set of rules that can be put into practice. These rules must be written in some sort of handbook that every teacher has access to.

### **Role Conflict**

Although co-teaching perspectives described by the participants reflected the four types of role ambiguity, the operationalization of co-teaching at John H. Brown School leads one to believe that the special education teachers adopt an assistant's position and the general education teachers adopt an instructional leader's position. Conventional literature on co-teaching use the term "*support facilitator*" to describe the role of the special education teacher. This term was used instead of "assistant." However, in practice and definition at the John H. Brown School, they mean the same thing. Staff at John H. Brown suggested that the term support facilitator means assistant.

Staff did not view the role of support facilitator as empowering and suggested that the role belonged to a lower status of teachers: second-class citizens. This contradicts the ideas presented by Stainback (1989) and Morocco and Aguilar (2002). These researchers suggested that co-teaching is a partnership and the role of the special education teacher is to be a supporter and the general education teacher is the instructional leader. These social scientists glorify the role of a facilitator. These opposing ideas about the role of the

special education teacher add to the notion that co-teaching roles are ambiguous. The above mentioned theorists suggest that support facilitator is a title that should be celebrated, whereas special education practitioners at the John H. Brown school perceived it as something that is degrading.

As stated in Chapter II, Stainback (1989) implied that “The skills needed by the support facilitator are similar to those skills needed by educational consultants: providing technical assistance, coordinating programs, and communicating with other professionals and students” (p.151). None of the special education teachers compared their position with an educational consultant. In fact, they each described different roles and responsibilities, which support the notion of role ambiguity. The different types of role ambiguity described by the special education teachers at this site reflect different understandings of being a second-class citizen.

During this study, half of the general education teachers made comments that aligned with the ideas presented by Stainback (1989) and Morocco and Aguilar (2002). In an interview with Ms. Gibbons, she discussed the importance of special education co-teaching partners assuming the role of facilitator in the classroom. She suggested that this role is essential to the co-teaching dynamic and co-teaching could not function in its absence. However, the way in which she described the role of a facilitator, mirrors the role of a secretary or administrative assistant. In her interview, she discussed how her co-teaching partner grades papers. She stated, “If she (special education teacher) was in the room on her own, she would just pick up the papers and grade them.” From her interviews, Ms. Gibbons insinuated that the paper work aspect of teaching is extremely important and someone has to do it.

Ms. Gibbon's perception of the role and responsibility of special education teachers in co-taught classrooms echoes the same logic used to justify secretaries. Secretaries play a vital role in several organizations and countless companies would not be able to survive without them. However, this logic is not applicable to special education teachers.

Within the realm of k-12 education, researchers and theorists sometimes focus on the stigmas connected to special education. Behavior and performance are two concepts that are crucial in understanding an individual and how they function within an organization (at any level) (Merrill & Reid, 1981). Currently within the literature, there is a lack of qualitative explanatory studies that address this issue with regards to special education teachers. What is the influence of the title special education teacher, on one's behavior, social standing, and job efficacy? Is there a stigma associated with teaching special education students? Special education teachers at John H. Brown answered yes.

Within this study, general and special education teachers did not focus on the role of the general education teacher; participants only stated that the general education teacher was the leader in co-taught classrooms. As a result, several of the special education teachers became frustrated and began to lose interest in trying to teach the entire class. They became comfortable with completing paperwork and walking around the classroom to assist the students.

After this type of arrangement was established, the special education teachers indicated that they became apathetic and less engaged with their general education co-teaching partners. A number of participants alluded to the idea that "Its just two bodies in a room working next to each other, not with each other." However, it is important to note

that the special education teacher did not ignore their professional responsibilities related to special education, such as working with students IEP.

A phenomenon emerged from this situation. As the special education teachers became more apathetic in the classroom, the general education teachers described them as being unmotivated, uninterested, and in some instances lazy. The second-class citizen label that special education co-teaching partners indicated was an inaccurate description, ultimately became a self-fulfilling prophecy. It became a vicious cycle of negativity, role ambiguity, role conflict, low organizational commitment, and low appreciation. The data presented by the participants seems to reflect the assumptions of the Pygmalion effect and Golem effect. According to Kierein and Gold (2000) the Pygmalion effect is the self-fulfilling phenomenon; it “involves a person or group of people acting in accordance with the expectations of another. That person or group may, on some level, internalize the higher expectations placed on them and then act in ways to fulfill those expectations” (p.913). However, what happens when individuals internalize negative expectations? The result is the Golem effect, essentially “the Golem effect is the Pygmalion process in a negative direction” (p.914): low expectations encourage low job performance.

Additionally, job performance, low expectations, and ambiguity all influence job significance. The notion of job significance proposed by Heizer and Render (2003) suggests that when individuals know what their responsibilities are and they are given the tools to fulfill those responsibilities, they will take pride in their job, which will increase job significance. Conversely, if individuals develop a negative attitude towards their job, then job pride and significance will decrease eventually influencing productivity negatively.

As stated in Chapter III, during his time in the classroom Mr. Adkins (a former general education teacher) did not enjoy working with another teacher (special education teacher) because he always viewed his partners as being lazy. However, several of the special education teachers stated that they adopted a passive role, not a lethargic role, due to role ambiguity and a second-class citizen perception that pervaded the co-teaching program in the school. Moreover, the reason they adopt a passive role is primary due to the general education teachers overbearing presence. According to Ms. Gifford, “The general education teachers always consider themselves the lead teacher”

This endless cycle of miscommunication is a result of both role ambiguity and role conflict. These two dimensions of co-teaching influenced special education teachers to unconsciously fulfill their role as a second-class citizen. However, some special education teachers refused to accept the role of second-class citizen. Instead, they did whatever it took to become more involved with the daily routine of the classroom. According to Merrill and Reid (1981), these special education teachers exhibited a driver-like style. Drivers are more task oriented and strong willed. This piece of information highlights an important question that has not been discussed in any of the literature. Should special education co-teachers espouse a more dominant social style in order to get their voice heard in the classroom? Merrill and Reid’s (1981) social style research suggests that it is possible for special education co-teachers to overcome some co-teaching issues if they change their style to be more dominant (regardless of the structure they are forced into).

Concerning teacher relationships, the concept of special education teacher involvement ran parallel to the concept of teacher bonds. The more involved the special

education teachers were with the instructional aspects of the classroom, the stronger their bond was with their co-teaching partners. The more isolated the special education teachers were from the instructional matters of the classroom, the more distant they were with their co-teaching partner. Within the literature on co-teaching, the overarching concept of isolation is under examined. When one co-teaching partner becomes isolated or excluded from the daily classroom routine, they risk isolating themselves emotionally, and physically. This could be manifested in the form of teachers purposefully avoiding their co-teaching partner during faculty meetings or professional development workshops. All of these predictable actions are components of the Golem effect.

The lack of communication between the special education and general education teachers is where most of the problems of co-teaching stem from. Since teachers' roles are ambiguous, conflict arises. In several co-taught classrooms, teachers were not properly trained to deal with these conflicts. What eventually results from this conflict is the "blame game." Teachers suggest that they cannot do their job effectively because their partner is incompetent. Eventually, tension begins to mount and teachers focus so much on their partner's incompetence, they themselves become incompetent. This idea is true for both the special and general education teachers.

The results of role conflict in co-taught classrooms are far reaching. Role conflict is a cancer that spreads among grade levels, influencing division amongst teachers. Role conflict influences co-teaching in three major ways, which include the formation of factions, absenteeism, and turfism. The formation of factions occurs when teachers start to cluster into small groups who share the same dislikes. Because teachers form these cliques, information and best practice skills are isolated to certain groups, which



influences student learning. Concerning turfism, Teachers tend to hoard their materials and protect their space when there is a role conflict with their co-teaching partner. Essentially, this practice influences what students have access to in the classroom. Absenteeism manifest in the form of teachers taking an excessive amount of days off, to avoid their co-teaching partner. In some instances, a teacher will frequently leave the classroom to take a “break” from their partner.

Some of the issues mentioned thus far can be attributed to the administrations lack of reflection on past practices. The administration has not examined whether or not their co-teaching practices are effective. Using the work of Salend (2007) and Merrill and Reid (1981) as a guide, I have concluded that several organizations in which people work in pairs use reflective analysis models. A reflective analysis model is any formal or informal method of evaluating past practices. Merrill suggested that feedback is an essential part of understanding personal relationship dynamics. Salend proposed that all parties involved in co-teaching should reflect on professional practices. Several of the failures mentioned are predictable and will continue to occur due to a lack of reflective organizational analysis.

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Role conflict was an issue in co-taught classes that arose in part from a lack of empathy and overall role ambiguity. The social-styles theory developed by David Merrill (1981) suggests that the social styles of people differ in many ways. These differences can cause stress in our personal and professional relationships. In order to repair broken co-teacher relationships, the administration must make it a policy to have teachers partake in role reversal activities during professional development workshops.

Essentially, a structure and process needs to be in place that facilitates the establishment of clear roles and responsibilities.

**Role Reversal Activity** During this study there was a great deal of underlining tension between teachers. Most of the tension that developed between teachers arose from the misinterpretation of roles. Teachers viewed each other's roles through "envious lenses." General education teachers suggested that their position had more responsibilities, therefore making it more difficult. General education teachers insinuated that special education teachers had better schedules because they were able to come and go as they pleased: They were not "tied down to one room." Additionally special education teachers are not responsible for grading as many papers as the general education teachers.

Conversely, special education teachers suggested that their position was difficult because it involved more degrading work such as; substituting and organizing supplies. Special education teachers suggested that only the general education teacher is recognized as the teacher in the classroom and the general education teacher receives most of the admiration and praise.

In order to develop a sense of understanding within co-taught classrooms, teachers should participate in role reversal activities. These activities would involve the two teachers informally adopting each other's responsibilities for a day and discussing their experience. This activity is one of the ultimate forms of understanding an opposing viewpoint or changing ones perspective on an issue. According to Muney and Deutsch (1968)

Role-reversal is a discussion procedure in which individual A presents individual B's viewpoint while individual B reciprocates by presenting A's viewpoint. They have postulated that such mutual taking of one another's role alleviates conflict by such processes as: reducing self-defensiveness, increasing one's understanding of the other's views, increasing the perceived similarity between self and other, increasing the awareness of the positive features in the other's viewpoint and the dubious elements in one's own position. (p.345)

The only problem with role reversal activities is that they are difficult to execute if teachers do not take them seriously. Therefore, as a practice the administration should sit in on various role reversal professional development workshops to ensure that teachers are following through with the activity (Fitzgerald, 2009).

### **The Structure of Co-Teaching Relationships**

Theories, ideas, and concepts on co-teaching fail to highlight what actually happens collegially in a classroom between the general education and special education teachers. Some of the information available, only superficially delves into the interpersonal dynamics of the co-teaching partners. Understanding and defining interpersonal relationships in the workplace can become cumbersome. Therefore, this study divided the observed relationships into three classifications. These classifications include; co-workers, partners, and friends. Within the context of this study, each classification has a distinct meaning. Together these classifications form a typology that administrators can use to better understand the dynamics of co-taught classrooms.

The term, co-workers, was used to describe co-teaching teams who had virtually no bond. Co-worker relationships had little to no communication. The teachers did not

interact with each other inside or outside of the classroom (unless it was necessary). Within this arrangement, teachers exhibited basic respect for each other, as long as their co-teaching partner did not interfere with their work. Furthermore, participants suggested that teachers within this arrangement demonstrated high levels of intangible tension. One of the major issues associated with the co-workers relationship was the diverging pedagogical philosophies of both teachers. Consequently, each teacher promoted their own style of teaching and did not consult with their partner.

The classification, partner, was used to describe co-teachers who worked closely in the classroom, but had limited contact outside the classroom. Participants suggested that partner relationships relied heavily on communication and collaboration in order to get through the day. Goal primacy was the number one factor in partner relationships. All behaviors in the classroom were geared toward improving student achievement. Teachers made decisions together, planned lessons together, and delivered instruction together. Most activities in the partner classroom reflected a joint effort. However, this did not mean that the two teachers were friends. Teachers in partner relationships cared more about student achievement than getting along.

The last relationship discussed by participants was friends. This classification was used to describe co-teaching arrangements in which the two teachers had a bond that extended outside of the classroom. Within this arrangement, teachers valued their partner's feelings and based a number of their decisions on how it would impact their partner. In friend relationships, teachers planned most activities together and sometimes delivered instruction together. Both social scientists and the faculty of John H. Brown proposed that friendship has the potential to help and hinder co-teaching. Some teachers

insinuated that people are more productive when they work with someone they like. According to Mao, Chen, and Hsieh, (2009), workplace friendships have positive functions, such as support, information sharing, enhanced job satisfaction, job performance, job involvement and organizational commitment. Participants also noted that friendship could harm the co-teaching process because teachers will not be completely honest with their friends. In addition, the deterioration of these friendships can impede student learning. According to Sias and Cahill (1998),

For individuals, losing a friend at work means losing an important source of support and intrinsic reward. Moreover, because workplace relationships are essential to organizational functioning, the deterioration of close relationships such as friendships is likely to impede work processes (p.322).

Table 3 summarizes the above mentioned relationship structures.

Table 3

<b>Co-Teaching Relationship Typologies</b>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Salient Characteristics</b>
Co-Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of Communication</li> <li>▪ Lack of Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Lack of Professionalism</li> <li>▪ Underlying Tension</li> <li>▪ Focused on what is most comfortable for them, not what is most effective for student learning.</li> <li>▪ Diverging Pedagogical Philosophies</li> </ul>
Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consistent Communication</li> <li>▪ Increased Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Focused on what is most effective for student learning.</li> <li>▪ Professionalism</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Congruent Pedagogical Philosophies</li> </ul>
Friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consistent Communication</li> <li>▪ Increased Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Increased Job satisfaction</li> <li>▪ Focused on what is most comfortable for them and their co-teaching partner, not what is most effective for student learning.</li> <li>▪ Congruent Pedagogical Philosophies</li> </ul>

From the data provided in Table 3, one can see that co-teaching relationships are both productive and non-productive. Teachers display a range of characteristics that are both a help and hindrance to students. Students can be influenced by co-teaching relationships in a variety of ways. This study did not collect data on student achievement or student behavior with respect to co-teaching relationships. However, the data collected from teacher interviews, combined with classical co-teaching literature, afforded me the opportunity to construct a basic forecast model of anticipated effects of productive and non-productive teacher relationships on student achievement. Using the four components of the theoretical framework constructed in chapter II and teacher responses as a guide, there are two major factors that co-teaching relationships influence. They are delivery of instruction and classroom management.

Delivery of instruction is one of the most important aspects of school as an entity. Students in co-taught classrooms rely on both of their teachers to be in sync in order to receive the greatest amount of information from each lesson. After distilling all of the data provided by participants, teachers and administrators insinuated that students who are placed in classrooms where their teachers have a co-workers relationship risk the

possibility of receiving disjointed lessons because the two teachers have diverging pedagogical philosophies. Additionally, students may capitalize on the overt division of the teachers and misbehave, ultimately causing a decrease in time on task. A closer examination of teacher and administrator transcripts revealed that students who were in classroom where the teachers had a partner relationship had a greater chance of receiving coherent instruction because the teachers developed a true team approach to teaching. Moreover, there is an increased chance that students will understand the behavioral parameters of the classroom.

Teachers and administrators insinuated that students who are placed in classrooms where their teachers exhibit a friends relationship could experience a productive or non-productive lesson. According to participants, in some instances teachers do what is best for their friends and not what is best for the students. In these types of situations, teachers are more social and less focused on student achievement: eventually causing a loss in instruction. In contrast, there are some friend relationships that operate similar to the partner relationship. The primary issue with the friend relationship is that it is unpredictable.

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Throughout this study, participant perspectives suggest that partners was the best co-teaching arrangement. According to participants, the partner relationships seem to yield the highest level of productivity. Therefore, the administration should tailor their co-teaching decision making around the formation of this relationship. Administrators should keep in mind that the process of evolving a co-teaching team is slow. All members of the instructional staff must employ a variety of strategies in order to achieve the

partner arrangement. However, several of those strategies can be based on the social style theory, which provides a framework for initiating organizational change. In order to reach the partner relationship, teachers and administrators must be willing to accept the concept interpersonal flexibility.

**Practice Interpersonal Flexibility.** Interpersonal flexibility is the ability to adapt to a wide variety of people in ways that are relatively stress-free for them. In co-taught classrooms, a teacher with high flexibility can sense the way in which his or her co-teaching partner prefers to interact. He or she has developed a broad range of behaviors that enable them to get in sync with various types of people. This entails managing ones half of a relationship in ways that are comfortable to the other person (Bolton & Bolton, 2009).

There are two major components of interpersonal flexibility that can be practiced in co-taught classrooms. The first, involves treating one's co-teaching partner the way in which all people want to be treated. The second component of interpersonal flexibility involves temporarily adjusting one's behavior to make interactions more comfortable for others. Essentially, it is more difficult to change someone else's behavior. "The primary leverage you have for improving a relationship is your own behavior" (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, p.83). Teachers can make a positive contribution to their relationship type by getting more in sync with their co-teaching partners way of interacting.

Unilaterally changing one's behavior to fit the needs of someone else can be quite taxing. Therefore, individuals attempting to practice interpersonal flexibility should only adjust a few behaviors at key times. The first step in adjusting ones behavior is to isolate key behavioral differences between you and your co-teaching partner. Then slowly



change your body language and the manner in which you verbally communicate to match that of your co-teaching partners (Bolton & Bolton, 2009, Darling & Cluff, 1987; Merrill & Reid, 1981).

Interpersonal flexibility can result in three positive outcomes for co-teaching teams. The first benefit is time. Changing one's behavior can result in immediate improvements in the relationship. If teachers wait on their partner to change his or her behavior, they could be waiting a very long time. Secondly, a person who has high flexibility and a willingness to adapt to others can achieve their own personal goals quicker. Lastly, when one partner changes his or her behavior, the other partner will often change their behavior in appreciation. What starts off as a one-sided compromise can result in a mutual change in behavior (Bolton & Bolton, 2009; Darling & Cluff, 1987; Merrill & Reid, 1981).

### **The Impact of Administrative Philosophy on Co-Teaching**

Throughout the majority of k-12 literature, social scientists have argued that the administration is a vital component of school culture. The staff and students will ultimately adopt the administration's philosophy and create a social system based on those values (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005). Depending on the school, those values might support or favor one group more than another. This creates an informal hierarchy that causes individuals to feel animosity towards favored groups.

Within the literature, the terms climate and culture are used interchangeably. Generally, school culture is defined as the implicit way in which a school operates. School culture is not something that is openly defined or discussed on a daily basis. Rather, it is a feeling that one senses when they walk into a building. Essentially, "school

culture is that intangible ‘feel’ of a school, the unspoken understanding of how things are done around here. You can sense it as you approach the building. You can almost smell and taste it...” (Deal, Peterson, & Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 1990,p.3).

The perception of the administration at John H. Brown towards co-teaching was “hands-off.” Administrators suggested that it is better to let the co-teachers solve their problems on their own. The administration insinuated that any solution they provided would only be temporary. Administrators made comments similar to “you can’t put a band aid on a broken leg.” Additionally, administrators suggested that any solution that they would provide would hurt the co-teaching relationship, instead of strengthening it. By letting the teachers solve their own issues, co-teams would ultimately become stronger and more productive. Teachers at John H. Brown did not share the same view as the administration. Teachers understood the administration’s position as a form of abandonment.

The administrations “hands-off” approach could have had a positive influence if a structure was created for teachers to follow. Several of the predictable issues associated with co-teaching are attributed to the lack of a formal structure and SOP (standard operating procedures). Without a structure in place, administrators are leaving much of the success of co-teaching to chance.

In a similar line of thinking, administrators fail to construct a structure that promotes belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. These three concepts are part of Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of needs pyramid and aid in fostering organizational commitment. The classical work of psychologist Abraham Maslow is the foundation for

several leadership and management theories today. From Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid, managers have come to understand that employees are motivated by a variety of wants. The actions of the administration at John H. Brown align with the first two categories of Maslow's theory. The administration ensures that all of the teachers' physiological and safety needs are met. The teachers' lounge is clean and free from obstruction. The building has security guards posted in all blind spots of the building. However, these actions are just the basic components of running any organization. Employees need more than these basic conditions if they are expected to reach optimal productivity. With regard to co-taught classes, teachers often never reach the upper three categories of Maslow's theory.

Belongingness is the third component of Maslow's theory. This category focuses on employees creating loving relationships with each other. The administration at John H. Brown did not care if teachers developed positive relationships. Administrators and some teachers insinuated that co-teachers are there for the students, not to make friends. However, several pieces of literature, and comments from staff members, have suggested that people need to care for one another, if they are expected to work together on a daily basis.

The fourth component of Maslow's pyramid is self-esteem. This category refers to ones need to feel valued in an organization. Overall, general education teachers were valued more than special education teachers. The final piece of Maslow's theory is the notion of self-actualization. This concept refers to an individual reaching their fullest potential. According to staff and one administrator, teachers in co-taught classes are not given enough support to reach their fullest potential as a unit. Some teachers have

attempted to reach their fullest potential as an individual, however, co-teaching is suppose to be a collaborative effort. Maslow's concept of self-actualization must be morphed to fit a team model. Co-teaching teams must strive to reach their fullest potential as a unit.

Additionally, administration of John H. Brown displayed bits and pieces of other management models; the most predominant being Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y" model. McGregor's managerial model highlights supervisors' assumptions about their employees. The administration of John H. Brown utilized a few of the assumptions built into the theory Y model. Theory Y builds on several of the concepts found in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Theory Y emphasizes choice, self-direction, employee reward, and satisfaction. The administration of John H. Brown enforced the concept of self-direction. As stated earlier, they believe that co-teaching teams should manage themselves.

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Throughout this study, teachers (both general and special-ed) highlighted several circumstances that prevent them from reaching their optimal potential as co-teaching units. The administration has adopted a "hands-off" approach that irritates teachers, which can result in a loss of instruction and learning. "If teachers are powerfully influential in the education of children and youth in school but the circumstances of teaching inhibit their function, then we need to modify these circumstances so as to maximize teachers' potential" (Goodlad, 1984, p.168).

**Practice Collaborative Leadership.** One of the major issues discussed in this study was the lack of support that the administration provides co-teachers. Several

teachers in this study stated that they would like to see the administration get more involved in the visceral components of co-teaching. Using collaborative leadership as a guide, administrators can become more equipped to meet the everyday demands of co-teaching. Collaborative leadership is a hands-on approach to governance in which all stakeholders are involved in the decision making process. Moreover, this can be accomplished without reducing the administrator's formal authority. According to Hallinger and Heck, (2010) "collaborative leadership focuses on strategic school-wide actions that are directed toward school improvement and shared among the principal, teachers, administrators and others" (p.97).

When implemented properly, collaborative leadership uses several governance structures and organizational practices that empower staff members and support broad participation in decision-making. This participation in the decision-making process is often in the form of inquiry. Staff members become fascinated with how the school is organized and begin to understand the reasoning behind certain decisions. According to Hallinger (2003), "the collaborative process inherent to the enquiry approach to school improvement offer the opportunity for teachers to study, learn about, to share and to enact leadership" (p.340).

Collaborative leadership requires administrators to change their view of what a leader should be. Some administrators still depend on leadership models that promote a hierarchical structure in which the principal is primarily responsible for managing the building and programs. This antiquated model of school leadership is rooted in the principal's omni-competence, not collaborative leadership (Williams, 2006).

Collaborative leadership promotes several organizational practices that can improve

administrator's relationships with co-teachers. Collaborative leadership encourages organizational commitment, professional learning, and shared accountability. Within the literature, these are the most beneficial components of collaborative leadership.

Throughout this study, the concept of morale was briefly highlighted. Teachers stated that the staff's morale was low and they wanted to know what the administration was going to do to address this issue. By incorporating collaborative leadership, teachers will become more committed to the school and each other. The result of this increased commitment will be improved morale.

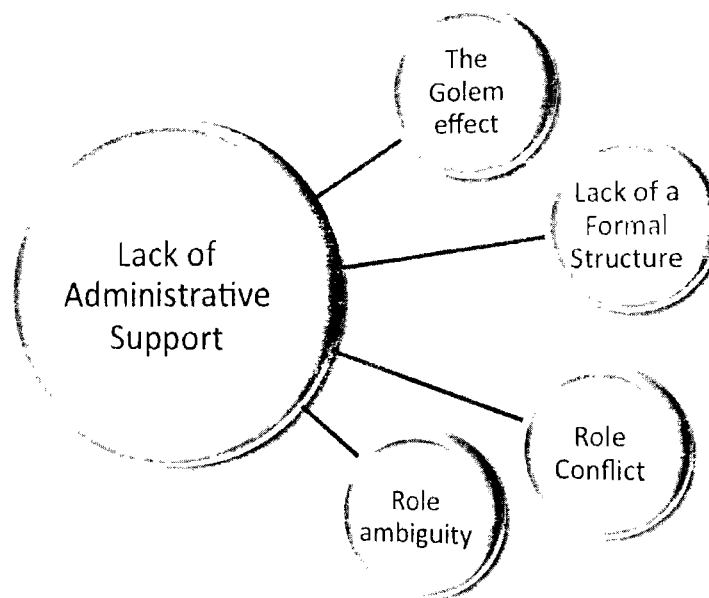
As commitment and morale increase, so does the opportunity for professional learning. According to the literature and teachers, professional learning is best when it occurs organically. Teachers stated that the district makes them go to a number of workshops that are useless, uninspiring and mundane. Mr. Smith stated, "I think they did send us to something on co-teaching.... I don't remember." Through collaborative leadership, the administration works in coordination with co-teachers in order to improve student achievement and learn from each other. Additionally, this coordination will increase accountability, since both the administration and co-teachers are privy to the same information.

### **Summary of Interconnected Themes**

All of the conclusions presented in this study are not mutually exclusive, rather they are interconnected. Each issue influences the next causing a vicious cycle of events. A closer examination of the participant's transcripts revealed that a lack of administrative support drives four destructive themes in co-taught classrooms. These themes include: (a)

lack of a formal structure, (b) the golem effect, (c) role ambiguity, and (d) role conflict.

Figure 4 helps to graphically link these major themes.



*Figure 4.* Interconnected Themes

### **Theory versus Practice**

The results of this study are generalizable only if the school being examined has a similar approach to co-teaching. The major issue that undergirds this entire study is a lack of administrative support. At the time of this study, co-teachers at the John H. Brown School had virtually no support from their administration with regards to co-teaching. This made it extremely difficult for teachers to successfully co-teach.

The theories used to construct the theoretical framework in Chapter II do not align with the empirical evidence discovered at the John H. Brown School. Concerning management, teachers lack a recognizable authority that they can turn to for assistance

with co-teaching issues. This concept leads to the division of labor. The co-teachers at the John H. Brown School have not been provided with a structure that identifies each teachers' duties; therefore, teachers are unsure how to divide the work load. With regard to collaboration, teachers insinuated that planning with their co-teaching partner was a challenge because they often had different schedules. Lastly, the teachers and administrators suggested that most co-taught classrooms comply with the majority of special education laws. The only time there is an issue, is when a special education teacher is asked to substitute for an absent teacher.

### **Future Research**

Additional research could focus on the students' experiences regarding the different types of co-teaching relationships highlighted in this study. It would be informative to determine if students' experiences differ depending on the type of relationship established by the co-teachers. Researchers could also examine the impact that students have on co-teaching relationships.

Further research could also be conducted using the same format as this study with more schools. In order to understand the perspectives of teachers who teach in different types of schools' the researchers could choose schools according to their location and demographics. Research questions could examine how location influences co-teaching practices. It would be beneficial to examine different types of schools to determine if some of the issues associated with co-teaching are only unique to certain geographic locations.



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## Appendix A

### IRB: Informed Consent Form



**Informed Consent Form**  
**Research on Joseph H. Breusinger School PS # 17**

**Researcher's Affiliation:** Darrell S. Carson, the individual conducting this research study, is a graduate student at Seton Hall University, in the Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy. In addition Darrell S. Carson is a teacher in the Jersey City Public Schools.

**The purposes of the research:** The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This includes examining their perspectives towards the co-teaching model and the kinds of relationships that are formed between co-teachers.

**The duration:** The duration of participation in this research will be approximately 45-60 minutes for two one-on-one interviews that will take place between November 2010 and April 2011.

**The research procedures:** Staff members who sign the consent form will participate in two interviews between November 2010 and April 2011. Each interview could last up to one hour. Darrell S. Carson will lead the interview and ask questions about the types of relationships that exist among co-teachers, the kinds of challenges that teachers come in contact with, and the teacher's perspectives on co-teaching. No one will be required to answer specific questions if they do not wish to do so. The interview will be audio taped.

**Instruments:** The researcher will use an interview question script. The questions that guide the interview will focus on understanding the co-teaching model used in inclusionary settings in middle schools. **Sample Questions Include:**

1. Describe the climate of your classroom and school?
2. How often are special education teachers called to substitute?
3. What, if any, professional satisfaction/enjoyment do you find in co-teaching?
4. What is the difference, if any, between the roles of a special education teacher and a general education teacher?
5. What suggestions would you have for others attempting to work in a co-teaching team?

**Participation in this research is voluntary and can be ended at any time. Staff can decide to leave the project whenever they wish.**

**Expiration Date**  
**OCT 27 2011**

Seton Hall University  
 Institutional Review Board

**OCT 27 2010**

College of Education and Human Services  
 Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy  
 Tel: 973.761.9397  
 400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, New Jersey 07079-2685

**Approval Date**



**Statement of Anonymity:** All comments from the interviews will remain entirely confidential. No one's name or identifying characteristics will be used in reports or presentations. Participants' identities will remain confidential.

**Records:** The tapes will be transcribed by the researcher without identifying anyone's names to keep the data anonymous and the transcript will be store in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. Participants may review the audiotapes and transcripts at any time. Any computerized copies of the interview material will be stored on a USB memory device, which will be stored with the printed material. After the research is completed, the audiotapes will be destroyed. Only the researcher for this study will be allowed to access the tapes and transcripts.

**Possible Risks:** There are no anticipated risks to taking part in this research. The measures that the researcher is taking to ensure everyone's confidentiality, means that each individual's participation will not be revealed. Nor will the information provided by any participant be traced to his or her participation.

**Benefits:** While there are no foreseeable direct benefits, it is anticipated that the results of this research will help improve the co-teaching model for teachers in the future.

**Remuneration:** None.

**Alternative procedures:** None.

**Contact Information:** Darrell S. Carson can be contacted at 973-580-1776 and at [carsonda@shu.edu](mailto:carsonda@shu.edu). He can be contacted at any time during the project or after the study is completed. Additionally, questions regarding participants' treatment or rights can be directed to the Office of the Institutional Review Board at Seton Hall University at 973-313-6314 or [irb@shu.edu](mailto:irb@shu.edu). The campus address is Presidents Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 400 South Orange Avenue South Orange, NJ 07079.

Participants will receive a copy of their signed consent form prior to the first interview.

Sincerely,

Darrell S. Carson

Seton Hall University  
Institutional Review Board

OCT 27 2010

- I agree to participate in the study
- I agree to be audio taped when I am interviewed

Approval Date

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

College of Education and Human Services  
Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy  
Tel: 973 761.9397  
400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, New Jersey 07079-2685

Expiration Date  
OCT 27 2011

Appendix B

Request for Approval of Research

**REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH, DEMONSTRATION OR RELATED ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS**

All material must be typed.

PROJECT TITLE: Understanding Teachers' Experiences in Co-taught Classrooms

**CERTIFICATION STATEMENT:**

In making this application, I (we) certify that I (we) have read and understand the University's policies and procedures governing research, development, and related activities involving human subjects. I (we) shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies. I (we) further acknowledge my (our) obligation to (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally-approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations, and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the subjects to the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ 07079.

*Darrell S Carson*

Darrell S Carson 8/29/10  
RESEARCHER(S) OR PROJECT DIRECTOR(S) DATE

\*\*Please print or type out names of all researchers below signature.  
Use separate sheet of paper, if necessary.\*\*

My signature indicates that I have reviewed the attached materials and consider them to meet IRB standards.

*Christopher H. Tienken*

Christopher H. Tienken Ed.D. 9/29/10  
RESEARCHER'S ADVISOR OR DEPARTMENTAL SUPERVISOR DATE

\*\*Please print or type out name below signature\*\*

The request for approval submitted by the above researcher(s) was considered by the IRB for Research Involving Human Subjects Research at the in Oct 2010 meeting.

The application was approved  not approved  by the Committee. Special conditions were  were not  set by the IRB. (Any special conditions are described on the reverse side.)

*Mary J. Ruzicka, Ph.D.*  
Mary J. Ruzicka, Ph.D.  
DIRECTOR,  
SETON HALL UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL  
REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

10/27/10  
DATE

Appendix C

Approval for Dissertation Proposal



**SETON HALL UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES**  
**OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**APPROVAL FOR DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

Candidate, Darrell Carson, has successfully completed all requisite requirements. This candidate's proposal has been reviewed and the candidate may proceed to collect data according to the approved proposal for dissertation under the direction of the mentor and the candidate's dissertation committee.

If there are substantive differences between what has been approved in the proposal and the actual study, the final dissertation should indicate, on a separate page in the Appendix, the approval of the committee for those changes.

Title of Proposed Dissertation: Understanding Teachers' Experiences  
in Co-Taught Classrooms

Dissertation Committee:

Mentor (sign/date): Christopher Tucker 9/21/10  
 PRINT NAME: Christopher Tucker

Committee Member (sign/date): [Signature] 9/29/10  
 PRINT NAME: Rebecca D. Cox

Committee Member (sign/date): Kim Eun young 9/23/10  
 PRINT NAME: Eunyoung Kim

Committee Member (sign/date): \_\_\_\_\_  
 PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board on \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chairperson (sign/date): \_\_\_\_\_

Waived by IRB by: \_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_

special education teacher.... that's the one that's usually drifting and not pulling their weight.

Keeping with the theme of team teaching, Mr. Gates stated, "I like the team teaching as the best. When you have two people that can work together and I think that the kids enjoy that." The only style that Mr. Gates did not approve of was one-teach, one-observe. He proposed that this style only occurred in classes in which the special education teacher was intimidated by the content or was not allowed to add their input. Mr. Gates concluded this thought by stating, "one teach, one observe happens a lot, especially in the upper grades because of the content matter, you know. A lot of the inclusion teachers .... they don't have the content knowledge, so they don't feel comfortable."

Ms. Gifford suggested that team-teaching is the best style because teachers are forced to share the workload. She believes that the other styles allow one teacher to do less work than his or her partner. She states, "I think team teaching works best because you're using both people.... have different skills and talents and ways of addressing it. So if you're both actively engaged in the overall management of the classroom..." She completed this thought by stating, "you're sharing the responsibility, the workload so to me that's the epitome of cooperative teaching, of two people being in the room or more than two people, if everyone is equally sharing in the responsibility." In a similar line of thinking Ms. Gibbons stated, "I think team teaching works the best, because you have more input not only from one person. You have more input from two teachers aspects of how they perceive the information."

Sep. 23. 2010. 11:33AM  
275 2847

SHU Dept ELM & P

No. 6243 P. 1001

**SETON HALL UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**APPROVAL FOR DISSERTATION PROPOSAL**

Candidate Darrell Carson, has successfully completed all requisite requirements. This candidate's proposal has been reviewed and the candidate may proceed to collect data according to the approved proposal for dissertation under the direction of the mentor and the candidate's dissertation committee.

If there are substantive differences between what has been approved in the proposal and the actual study, the final dissertation should indicate, on a separate page in the Appendix, the approval of the committee for those changes.

Title of Proposed Dissertation: Understanding Teachers' Experiences  
in Co-Taught Classrooms

Dissertation Committee:

Mentor (sign/date): Christina Tucker 9/21/10  
PRINT NAME: Christina Tucker

Committee Member (sign/date): [Signature]  
PRINT NAME: Annex P. [Signature] 9/25/10

Committee Member (sign/date): \_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Member (sign/date): \_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

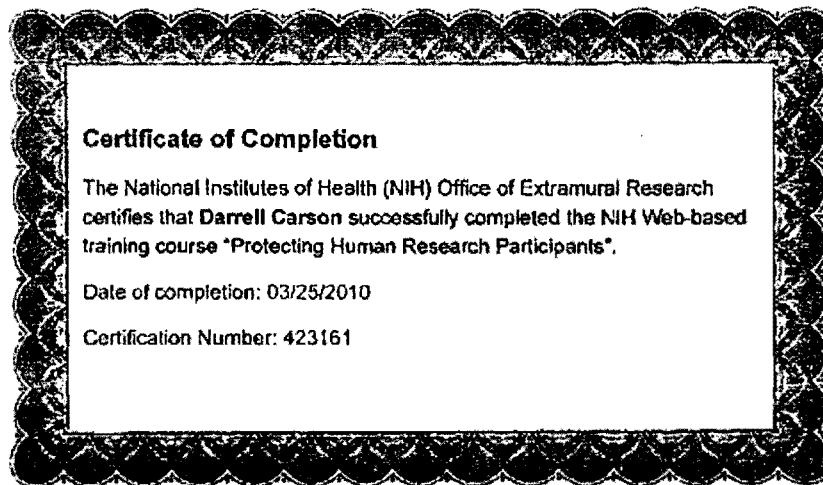
Approved by Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board on \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chairperson (sign/date): \_\_\_\_\_

Waived by IRB by: \_\_\_\_\_ on this date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix D

Protecting Human Subjects Certificate



Appendix E

District Approval to Conduct Research



Office of the Superintendent

THE JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
348 CLAREMONT AVENUE  
JERSEY CITY, NEW JERSEY 07305  
Telephone - (201) 915-6201  
Fax - (201) 915-6084



Charles T. Epps, Jr., Ed. D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Dear Mr. Carson,

I provide my consent for you to conduct your study in the Jersey City School District during the 2010-2011 school year. I understand the following:

**The purposes of the research** The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This includes examining their perspectives towards the co-teaching model and the kinds of relationships that are formed between co-teachers.

**The duration:** Darrell S Carson will conduct two one hour interviews for each participant. This will take place between October 2010 and April 2011.

The research will be conducted by Darrell S Carson, graduate student at Seton Hall University, in the Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy. The results of this research may benefit the Jersey City School District by providing administrators and staff information about ways to help teachers foster positive work relationships.

**The research procedures:** approximately 10-14 teachers at the School P.S. # and 2-4 district administrators will participate in two interviews during the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters. Each interview could last up to one hour. Darrell S Carson will lead the interview and ask questions about the types of relationships that exist among co-teachers and the collaborative methods teachers use in a general education classroom. No one will be required to answer specific questions if they do not wish to do so. The interviews will be audio taped.

**Participation in this research is voluntary.** Participants can decide to leave the project whenever they want. For those who agree to be audio taped, the tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home.

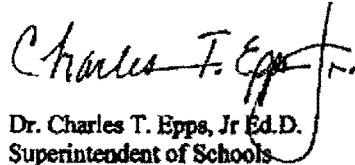
The tapes will be transcribed by the researcher without identifying anyone's names to keep the data anonymous and the transcript will be store in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home. Participants may review the audio tape and transcript at any time. Any computerized copies of the interview material will be stored on a USB memory device, which will be stored with the printed material. After the research is completed, the audiotapes will be destroyed. Only the researcher for this study will be allowed to access the tapes and transcripts.

THE JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS - AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

All comments from the interviews will remain entirely confidential. No one's real names or identifying characteristics will be used in reports or presentations. Real names will not be used during the interviews for the audio-taped portions. Participants' identities will remain confidential. There are no anticipated risks to taking part in these interviews.

Participants' will receive a copy of their signed consent form prior to the first interview.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles T. Epps, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Jersey City Public Schools



Appendix F  
Letter Requesting District Permission

Darrell S. Carson  
53 Cherry Street  
Jersey City, NJ 07305  
November 1, 2010

Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr  
Superintendent of Schools  
Jersey City Public Schools  
346 Claremont Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ 07305

Dear Dr. Epps

In addition to being a science teacher for the district, I am also a doctoral student at Seton Hall University enrolled in the traditional Ed.D program. My dissertation topic is: Teachers Perspectives of Co-Teaching in an Inclusive Classroom in a Middle School. I am requesting your permission to conduct my research in the Jersey City Public School District pending approval of the Seton Hall Institutional Review Board.

**The purposes of the research:** The purpose of this study is to examine how teachers understand their experiences in co-taught classrooms as they work to meet the needs of all students. This includes examining their perspectives towards the co-teaching model and the kinds of relationships that are formed between co-teachers. The literature on co-teaching and preliminary observational data suggests that collaboration, collegiality, planning, parity, organizational commitment, and labor specialization are all key concepts in the world of co-teaching. These concepts are highlighted because they each play a part in how teachers characterize their experience in co-taught classrooms.

**The research procedures:** Staff who decide to participate will join a private, one-on-one, 45-60 minute interview during the fall 2010 semester. Up to two interviews will take place during the months of November 2010, December 2010 and January 2011. Interview questions will focus on the research participant's role in a co-taught classroom, the kinds of challenges that the participant comes into contact with, and the participant's perspective on co-teaching in the Jersey City Public Schools. No one will be required to answer specific questions if they do not wish to do so. If the participant agrees to be audio taped, the participant may review the audio tape after the interview.

**Participation in this research is voluntary** and can be ended at any time. Staff can decide to leave the project whenever they wish.

**For Staff who agree to be audio taped,** the audio tape will be stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home and tapes will be transcribed by the researcher without identifying anyone's names, and the transcript will be stored in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home. Participants may review the audio tape and the transcript at any time. Computerized copies of the interview material will be stored on a USB memory device

which will be stored with the printed material. After the research is completed, the audiotapes will be destroyed.

All comments from the interviews will remain **entirely confidential**. No one's name or identifying characteristics will be used in reports or presentations. Participants' identities will remain confidential.

**The people in charge of this research study** are Darrell S Carson, principal investigator, Dr. Christopher Tienken, Dr. Becky Cox, Dr. Eunyoung Kim, and Dr. Patrick Michel, dissertation committee. Darrell S Carson can be contacted at 973-580-1776 and at carsonda@shu.edu. Dr. Tienken can be contacted at 732.233.2738 and at tienkech@shu.edu. Dr. Cox can be contacted at 973-761-9106 and at coxrebec@shu.edu. Dr. Kim can be contacted at 973.275.2514 and at kimeun@shu.edu. Dr. Michel can be contacted at 935-3800 #4213 and at michel@salemnj.org

Sincerely

Darrell S Carson

Appendix G  
Interview Questions

Co-teaching Interview Questions for administrators

Notes

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How long have you been in education?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What influenced you to enter into the field of education?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How did you come to work at this school?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is your educational philosophy?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe the climate of your school?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe your students? (Personality, attitudes, etc)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe your teachers? (Personality, attitudes, etc)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take me through typical day at your school ?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How would you define the term “Co-teaching”</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How is co-teaching functioning in your school? (How is co-teaching structured in this school)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define the roles of a special education teacher and a general education teacher in the classroom?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can you give me a word that would summarize the co-teaching relationships in the middle school ?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of discussions do you think co-teaching partners have ?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What do you think they should discuss?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do you think co-teaching partners structure planning?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kinds of things has the school done to support the co-teaching model here?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of training do you offer teachers to get ready to co-teach?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of support if any has the district provided instructional leaders with to improve the co-teaching model</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who can the teachers talk to for support when they have a question or challenge with co-teaching?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What does that person do as a result of the discussion?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of things would you recommend a district do for its teachers?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How would you rank the special ed teachers?</li> </ul>	

(Principal → Sub-teacher)	
▪ How has your role changed, if at all from your experience with co-teaching?	
▪ Describe the relationship dynamics between special education and general education teachers. (Explain what you mean by that. Elaborate on that thought)	
▪ Describe your classroom experience with co-teacher.	
▪ Did collaboration occur in your classroom? (If yes, how is it structured? If no, how do you feel about that?)	
▪ Who has the primary grading responsibilities?	
▪ What conflicts, if any, do co-teaching partners experience?	
▪ How often are special education teachers called to substitute? (How does that make you feel? How do you think that impacts their importance in the school?)	
▪ What challenges, if any have you encountered being an instructional leader in charge of co-teaching teams? (Tell me more about...)	
▪ How does the workload get divided between the co-teaching partners? (Meaning who calls the parents? Who writes the lesson plans? How is discipline structured in your room? ect)	
▪ What, if any, professional satisfaction/enjoyment do you believe teachers gain from co-teaching?	
▪ What is the difference, if any, is there between the roles of a special education teacher and a general education teacher? (Elaborate on teaching methodology and the interactions between the two different types of teachers)	
▪ Tell me a memorable experience you've had in a co-taught classroom?	
▪ What influences, if any, has co-teaching had on your professional growth as an educator? (What did you learn from the experience?)	
▪ What suggestions would you have for others attempting to work in a co-teaching team?	
▪ How long have you been teaching?	
▪ What influenced you to become a teacher?	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How did you come to teach at this school?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is your educational philosophy?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe the climate of your classroom and school?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe your students? (Personality, attitudes, etc)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take me through typical day in your classroom?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How would you define the term “Co-teaching”</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How is co-teaching functioning in your school? (How is co-teaching structured in this school)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Define your role in the classroom?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can you give me a word that would summarize your relationship?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of discussions do you have with your co-teaching partner?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the most common things you talk to your coop about?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How do you go about planning with your co-teaching partner</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kinds of things has the school done to support the co-teaching model here?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of training did you receive to get ready to co-teach?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of other information did you receive, if any, that informed you about the co-teaching model?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who do you talk to for support when you have a question or challenge with co-teaching?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What does that person do as a result of your discussion?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What types of things would you recommend a district do for its teachers?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How would you rank the special ed teachers? (Principal → Sub-teacher)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How has your role changed, if at all from your co-teaching experience?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe the relationship dynamics between special education and general education teachers. (Explain what you mean by that. Elaborate on that thought)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe the your current relationship with your co-teacher.</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Does collaboration occur in your classroom? (If yes, how is it structured? If no, how do you feel about that?)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Who has the primary grading responsibilities?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What conflicts, if any, have you had with your co-teaching partner? (How do you work through those conflicts?)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How often are special education teachers called to substitute? (How does that make you feel? How do you think that impacts their importance in the school?)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What challenges, if any have you encountered working in a co-teaching team? (Tell me more about...)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How does the workload get divided between the co-teaching partners? (Meaning who calls the parents? Who writes the lesson plans? How is discipline structured in your room? ect)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What, if any, professional satisfaction/enjoyment do you find in co-teaching?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What is the difference, if any, is there between the roles of a special education teacher and a general education teacher? (Elaborate on teaching methodology and the interactions between the two different types of teachers)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tell me a memorable experience you've had working in a co-taught classroom?</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What kind of support, if any, have you received? (What kind of support would you like?)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What influences, if any, has co-teaching had on your professional growth as an educator? (What did you learn from the experience?)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What suggestions would you have for others attempting to work in a co-teaching team?</li> </ul>	



## Appendix H

### Codebook

## Code Book

## Understanding Teacher's Perspectives in Co-taught classes

Label	Collaboration
Definition	The process in which two or more individuals work together to achieve a common goal.
General Description	Teachers are aware of their role in the collaboration process. This could mean being an active member or being completely isolated from the process.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion -For a set of data to qualify for this code there must be the mention of two or more teachers working together or not working together. During the interview, teachers may discuss methods of communicating with each other both verbally or in written form.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, teachers are not in a collaborative setting (Examples include resource rooms and none co-taught classes)</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion – “In very few instances, the inclusion teacher will actually write the lesson plans for the general education teacher.”</p> <p>Exclusion - “I feel like the general Education teacher really feels that it is their domain,”</p>
Sub-codes	<p>Planning – Teachers working together in order to plan lessons and student activities.</p> <p>Discipline- Teachers sharing the responsibilities of discipline within the classroom; this includes discussing strategies to correct student behavior.</p> <p>Instruction- Both teachers taking an active role in delivering instruction through one of the six collaborative co-teaching models.</p>

Label	Teacher Relationship
Definition	The bonds that are formed between teachers based on their daily interactions with their co-teaching partners.
General Description	During the school day teachers engage in a variety of activities that determine their relationships with their co-teaching partners. These relationships could range from friends to enemies.
Description of inclusion and	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the transcript must highlight the manner in which teachers

exclusion	<p>interact with their co-teaching partners.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, there is no mention of teacher interaction or relationship.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion – “I don't think friendship has anything to do with it. I think you just have to respect each other, and that's the one thing I try to do, by eliminating a primary and a secondary role.”</p> <p>Exclusion - “You can put your belongings in the desk, yeah, but the point is, it's not – the desk isn't your home. It's not. It's like when teachers move from class to class.”</p>
Sub-codes	<p>Trust- Teachers who believe that trust is important variable within to the co-teaching dynamic.</p> <p>Friendship- Teachers who believe that friendships is either essential or irrelevant in the co-teaching dynamic.</p> <p>Intangible bond- Relationships that have a unique dynamic that hinders or helps the co-teaching process.</p> <p>Respect- Teachers who believe that respect is the most important component within any relationship.</p> <p>Equals- Teachers who believe that there should be no roles at all. Both teachers are equally responsible.</p>

Label	Role
Definition	The position that one adopts within their organization.
General Description	As teachers work together they take on certain positions. These positions could be formal, meaning that the administration has placed them there. Or informal, meaning that the culture within the organization has placed them there.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- for a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must allude to their role or their partner's role within the school (past or present).</p> <p>Exclusion- A set of data will be excluded from this code if the participant makes no mention of their position or their partner's position (past or present).</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion – “I just feel like they get the low man on the totem pole. I'm like, "I'm not the low man on the totem pole anymore. Find somebody else.”</p> <p>Exclusion - “Sometimes we get a good mix and every once</p>

	in a while we have a bad marriage,”
Sub-code	<p>Assistant/Second Class Citizen – Any piece of data that suggests that a teacher is beneath his or her colleagues.</p> <p>Facilitator – Any piece of data that suggests that a teacher is helping to keep the classroom running smoothly. A class manger.</p> <p>Instructional Leader – Any piece of data that suggest that a teacher is in the lead position.</p>

Label	Administration
Definition	A formal leadership position, where a person has some form of official authority over others.
General Description	All schools have administrators. These are the individuals that make key decisions for the entire building/ district.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant mentions how the current/past administration has affected the dynamic of co-teaching within the building.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant makes no mention of the administration or decisions that the administration has made.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion – “When you evaluate someone, I think at the district level, you're not too familiar with what's going on, on a daily basis.”</p> <p>Exclusion – “I had the dad role, being a disciplinarian.”</p>
Sub-codes	<p>Scheduling- Any piece of data that answers the following question. How have the scheduling decisions that the administration has made affected the dynamic of co-teaching I the building?</p> <p>Mentorship/Support – Any piece of data that addresses the following question. What day-to-day support has the administration provided to co-teaching teams?</p> <p>Professional Development- Any piece of data that addresses the following question. What building wide initiatives and professional development opportunities have the administration provided to co-teaching teams?</p>

Label	Personality
Definition	Personality is a hard term to define, however one can define

	personality as a set of characteristics/traits that comprises ones persona.
General Description	All humans have characteristics that define who they are. Some of these characteristics can be charming or irritating. Nevertheless colleagues must learn to accept each other's personas if the organization is expected to succeed.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must discuss their persona or their partner's persona.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant makes no mention of the impact of ones personality on co-teaching.
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion – “they don't complain. So they're more flexible”  Exclusion – “I find that when I came to this district in particular, mentor teaching wasn't done for special Education teachers.”
Sub-codes	Dominant- Teachers that needs to be in control.  Passive- Teacher that will act in more of a support role.  Flexible- Teacher that can adjust to change within a reasonable amount of time.  Rigid- Teachers that are unwilling to change.

Label	Challenges facing co-teaching
Definition	Challenges that face co-teaching is a code that aggregates all of the common problems within the field.
General Description	All organizations have problems that are unique to their field. This code compiles all of these problems together based on how frequently they show up in the transcripts.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- for a set of data to qualify for this code, it must be a problem that the participant has referenced frequently within the transcript.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the excerpt must be a problem that is not mentioned often. (Less then twice)
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion – “Teachers are very territorial, very possessive. ‘This is mine, this is mine, this is mine.’ ”  Exclusion – “you can't teach an old dog new tricks, and they're master of their own domain.”

Label	Division of labor
Definition	Division of labor means that each person within a team has a specific duty. Division of labor has also been called labor specialization.
General Description	Within all organizations there are certain individuals that are responsible for certain tasks. With regards to co-teaching, the division of labor can be vague or extremely structured.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must discuss how they divide the workload in the classroom.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant makes no mention of who does what in the classroom.
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion – “they divvy up some of the classroom responsibility. "I'll do the reading; you do the writing." We'll do this, we'll do that.”  Exclusion – “You're a guest in my house. This is my classroom.”

Label	Co-teaching model
Definition	The method in which co-teaching is structured
General Description	There are six widely expected co-teaching models in k-12 literature. These models are facilitated through teachers everyday actions.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must allude to a type of co-teaching model used in their classroom or a colleague's classroom.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant makes no mention of any co-teaching models
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion – “I'm not a big fan of one teach, one observe. Not at all. To me, that is the biggest waste of money in the classroom.”  Exclusion – “know to have a home, I don't know if it's gonna say, "Our desk," because after 90 minutes, the inclusion teacher walks out.”

Label	Work Station
Definition	An area where one completes his/her work
General Description	Teachers Desk and chair
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion -For a set of data to qualify for this code there must be a mention of furniture or classroom space (teacher's desk, chair or resource room)</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code there is no mention of furniture or classroom space.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion – “know to have a home, I don't know if it's gonna say, "Our desk," because after 90 minutes, the inclusion teacher walks out.”</p> <p>Exclusion – “you can't teach an old dog new tricks, and they're master of their own domain.”</p>

Label	Productivity
Definition	The idea that more teachers in a room will result in greater educational opportunities for all students
General Description	With regards to co-teaching, productivity is the notion that two are better than one. This is a large piece of the justification for co-teaching.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must discuss the pros/cons of having two people in a classroom.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant does not discuss the pros/cons of having another person in the room.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion –“Two teachers in the classroom, those two teachers are going to make sure that child succeeds when they're doing their job correctly.”</p> <p>Exclusion –“I think with the language arts program, it really forces people to do station teaching.”</p>

Label	Age/Years teaching
Definition	Ones chronological age and the time that one has spent at their job.
General Description	Ones chronological age and the time that one has spent at

	their job can affect the way in which they interact with their colleagues. These interactions can be positive, in the form of a mentor. Or poisonous, a person who refuses to change.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must mention the affect of ones age/years of experience on the co-teaching dynamic.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant does not mention anything related to age or years of experience.
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion- “you can't teach an old dog new tricks, and they're master of their own domain.”  Exclusion- “By holding them accountable, and holding them accountable to test scores, with two teachers in a room, there should be no margin of that for error.”

Label	Reflective Narratives
Definition	Any detailed story related to co-teaching
General Description	Stories often paint a detailed picture of ones experiences. The information gleaned from these narratives will support the other codes within this study.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must reflect on past experiences within co-teaching.  Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant does not reflect on past co-teaching experiences.
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	Inclusion- “I was ready to, gun ho. First year teaching, I'm ready to walk in the classroom. I'm ready to open my mouth, and all of a sudden she comes out of nowhere and lays down the law the first day.”  Exclusion- “I've seen older teachers that are great.”

Label	Tri-teaching
Definition	Three teachers in a room.
General Description	Tri-teaching is rare but it does occur in some situations. Tri-teaching occurs when three teacher are scheduled to be in a classroom at the same time.
Description of inclusion and	Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code the participant must discuss how they feel about three teachers



	<p>being in a classroom.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code the participant does not discuss how they feel about three teachers being in a room.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “the only way we see tri-teaching here is when, during the world language periods where there's the world language teacher, the general Ed teacher and the inclusion teacher. Some, in some of the other classes where there's a student may have an individual aide, you'll have the general Ed inclusion and the special Ed aide.”</p> <p>Exclusion- “Instead of questioning it, they just accept it and do the modifications, and that's how the tone is set. So for that reason, to me, I provide you with the plans, you followed what I told you to do, and you modify.”</p>

Label	Compliance
Definition	Following a set of rules and regulations.
General Description	With regards to co-teaching compliance mean following or breaking special education laws. (IDEA)
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For set of data to qualify for this code the participant must mention how their co-teaching situation conforms or breaks special education laws.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded form this code, the participant makes no mention of how their co-teaching situation reflects special education law.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “Well, first of all, it’s against the law. I mean my students have an IEP and they’re not being serviced. So I think we’re not in compliance on that level.”</p> <p>Exclusion- “The personality is if one's – I'm just going to use a generic – one's an overachiever and one's a slacker. So the one's going to do the bare minimum.”</p>

Label	Metaphors
Definition	Metaphors are descriptive images of ones thoughts and experiences.
General Description	During many of the interviews, participants believed that they could express their ideas more accurately if they where able to compare co-teaching to something in their own lives. This code will help to support neighboring codes and ideas.

Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must use a metaphor to describe their thoughts.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant does not use a metaphor to describe their experiences.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- "To me, inclusion is a marriage. If it's not healthy, it's not going to be successful, just like in any marriage. If the mother and father are constantly arguing, and not supporting each other, the kids are going to pick up on it."</p> <p>Exclusion- "There's a lot of laws that have to deal with special Ed, and I don't think too many general Ed teachers know that."</p>

Label	School Climate
Definition	The physical and social atmosphere of the school.
General Description	All organizations have a certain feel about them. What emotions are experienced within that organization? In schools "climate" includes the behavior of the teachers and students. The way in which the administration governs their building and the physical arrangement of the building.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must describe the over –all condition of the school.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant does not discuss the condition of the school.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- "Here it seems like from what I've just – from the couple of months that I've been here, everybody seems to work together. It doesn't look – nobody is segregating themselves. Everybody is trying to work together because we're here for the kids."</p> <p>Exclusion- "Now, if that isn't communicated with you, you're not going to be addressing that student's IEP as well as an art, language art and all the other subjects as well."</p>

Label	Professional Satisfaction
Definition	The enjoyment that one acquires from work
General Description	Within an organization there are those that enjoy what they are doing and there are those that dislike it. Same can be said for co-teaching, there are teachers that think it is a benefit and there are those that believe that it is a waste of resources.

Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must express their aversion or fondness of co-teaching.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant does not discuss their dislike or like of co-teaching.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “I honestly think there's some that actually welcome an extra set of hands, an extra set of eyes, someone to obtain some knowledge from.”</p> <p>Exclusion- “You have children whose parents don't understand, culturally, that they might have a disability – don't want to acknowledge it.”</p>

Label	State Testing
Definition	Tests that students must take that are created by the state.
General Description	During some of the interviews teachers discussed how state testing has impacted their relationship with their co-teaching partners.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must mention how state testing has affected co-teaching within their school.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant makes no mention of state testing.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “No. Suggestions have been pooled around the tribe but a lot of things are focused on testing. So how can you get these scores up? How do you get – how can we get our students to pass?”</p> <p>Exclusion- “I think it’s very comfortable, and sometimes I think that I was a little too comfortable with them in the beginning.”</p>

Label	Definition of co-teaching
Definition	The way in which someone defines co-teaching.
General Description	The way in which individuals define co-teaching reflects their understanding of the concept and directly impacts their behavior.
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must define co-teaching.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant does not define co-teaching.</p>

Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “I would define it as two teachers working together in the classroom, both teachers teaching. I know that you can teach together, you can step right into groups, one teacher can teach while the other teacher drifts and makes sure that all the students are on task,”</p> <p>Exclusion- “Because the 8th grade had the science NJASK portion. So it was always geared towards more science because the NJS portion was like 6th, 7th, and 8th grade science.”</p>
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Label	Turfism
Definition	Turfism is a term that is loosely defined within the literature on co-teaching. However, turfism can be thought of as the way in which one stakes their claim or marks their territory.
General Description	Throughout many of the interviews, the participants expressed how territory was an important component within co-taught classrooms
Description of inclusion and exclusion	<p>Inclusion- For a set of data to qualify for this code, the participant must mention the importance/ insignificance of territory.</p> <p>Exclusion- For a set of data to be excluded from this code, the participant does not discuss the concept of territory.</p>
Examples (Inclusion and Exclusion)	<p>Inclusion- “Teachers are very territorial, very possessive. ‘This is mine, this is mine, this is mine.’ ”</p> <p>Exclusion- Here it seems like from what I’ve just – from the couple of months that I’ve been here, everybody seems to work together. It doesn’t look – nobody is segregating themselves. Everybody is trying to work together because we’re here for the kids.</p>

Appendix I

Permission to use Social Styles Grid



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