

12-1-1976

# A Study of Basic Characteristics and Views of Team Teaching Programs and the Expectations of Elementary School Principals Currently Supervising Team Teaching

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A STUDY OF BASIC CHARACTERISTICS AND VIEWS OF  
TEAM TEACHING PROGRAMS AND THE EXPECTATIONS OF  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS  
CURRENTLY SUPERVISING TEAM TEACHING

Presented to the

Graduate Faculty  
University of Nebraska  
at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Specialist in Education

University of Nebraska at Omaha

by

Joel G. Christiansen

December, 1976

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FIELD PROJECT ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the Graduate Faculty, University of Nebraska,  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist  
in Education, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Supervisory Committee

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8-4-77  
Date

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research to the memory of my beloved father, Harold Jens Christiansen (1909-1968), without whose inspiration I would not have pursued my career to this extent. I would also like to express appreciation to my mother. Dr. Kellams, Dr. Howell, and Dr. Petrie, whose patience, guidance and direction led me through this study, are most certainly deserving of thanks. A special thanks goes to my wife and children, whose patience, understanding and love were of the most importance.

## INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, in Fremont, Nebraska, the elementary schools have been organized around self-contained classrooms. However, during the past year, efforts have been made in the Clarmar Elementary School to change this arrangement, and capitalize upon the special abilities and interests of the teachers in the intermediate grades. For example, in a fifth grade, one of the two teachers instructed both sections of math, while the other taught English. With this background experience, the fourth and fifth grade staff members concluded that the advantages of "team teaching" and the self-contained classroom should be incorporated into their instructional 1976-77 school year. Toward this end, the participating staff members and the principal engaged in cooperative planning during the spring and summer. In the autumn of 1976, the team was composed of four teachers. They organized and developed their plans cooperatively and the leadership role was rotated from teacher to teacher.

During the spring and summer the staff explicitly, if not implicitly, revealed that the following aspirations and expectations would result from their efforts:

1. Through team planning and specialization of areas, or interests, individual teachers will keep abreast of developments, and share them with their colleagues and students.
2. Through team planning there will be more flexibility and interrelatedness of subject matter and the arts.
3. Through team planning and coordination, the processes of teaching will become more explicit, and the evaluation of instruction will be better. The absence of one

teacher in the team will not be as disruptive as in a self-contained classroom. Hopefully, the flexibility gained through cooperative planning will contribute to the communication of plans and alternatives available to the substitute and the team.

4. Through team planning, the combined talents of teachers will increase their individual effectiveness and the alternatives available to students.
5. Through team planning, the team will use its opportunities to help each other in their professional development.

With these high hopes the plan was initiated for the 1976-77 school year. Describing and assessing the program for continuous decision making appeared to be imperative.

## THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the Problem

The problem of this field project is how to secure and provide both descriptive and comparative information to the staff for decision making and evaluation.

## THE PURPOSE

### Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to describe the Clarmar Elementary School Intermediate Team Teaching program and contrast the program with the expectations of elementary school principals whose schools were engaged in team teaching.

### Importance of the Study

The movement in American education, called team teaching, is currently attracting widespread attention and enthusiasm. The movement has been shown: to be distributed widely throughout the country; to involve large numbers of communities, teachers, students; and to have significant support from universities, foundations, and professional

associations. James Meyer, in his article, "Problems of Team Teaching," makes a relevant statement:

We have embarked upon a sea of togetherness in education. The fact is that team teaching is upon us, and we had better at least understand it, or move in the eddies and shallows often allotted to those whose love of the tried and true has left no greater vision.<sup>1</sup>

With respect to Clarmar, this study will provide an opportunity to determine if team teaching results in more efficient planning, better communication among the staff involved, and more effective use of the area of expertise of each teacher.

#### PROCEDURE

With the desire to professionally assess the merits of the Clarmar team teaching program and to improve the program, this study will: (1) review the literature for the characteristics of a model team teaching program; (2) describe the Clarmar Elementary School Team Teaching Intermediate Program in terms of the objectives, curricular program, and organization; (3) develop a survey instrument based on the characteristics of a model team teaching program; (4) survey principals engaged in team teaching for their perceptions of the relevance of the identified expectations; (5) describe the findings gleaned from the survey instrument; (6) summarize, conclude and make recommendations.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Self-contained classroom. The self-contained classroom is an organizational arrangement in which a group of pupils is under the

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<sup>1</sup>James A. Meyer, "Problems of Team Teaching," Clearing House, 42 (February, 1968), 362.



instructional leadership of one teacher for the major portion of a day.

Team leader. A team member responsible for maintaining, initiating, and integrating structure in expectations and interaction.

Team teaching. Team teaching is an organizational arrangement that provides for two or more teachers assuming joint responsibility for planning and directing the learning activities of a group of students. Together, the members of the team take charge of planning lessons, developing appropriate methods and materials, and teaching and evaluating a program of studies for their student group.<sup>2</sup>

Individualized instruction. Individualized instruction is an instructional program that is suited to the needs of individual learners. Three major types of organizational changes are being used to foster individualization: (1) non-grading the schools so that students can proceed along the curriculum sequences at different rates in accordance with their rates of learning; (2) using learning materials and devices that enable the student to study independently and proceed at his own pace; (3) flexible grouping that permits grouping according to the common needs and interests of a number of children.<sup>3</sup>

Master teacher. A master teacher possesses experience to complement his professional training. The experience is characterized by areas of interest, children's development, as well as competence in related fields of study.

Paraprofessional. A paraprofessional is a team member selected to

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<sup>2</sup>William B. Ragan, Modern Elementary Curriculum (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1971), p. 146.

<sup>3</sup>Judson T. Shaplin and Henry F. Olds, Jr., Team Teaching (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 351.

assist with classroom tasks not directly conceived as teaching.

#### LIMITATION

This study is limited to the Clarmar Elementary School. It explains how the Clarmar Elementary School team teaching staff has attempted to achieve the objectives of the model team teaching program derived from the literature and perception of principals engaged in team teaching. The findings regarding the initiation and implementation of team teaching may have applicability to other elementary schools.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The organization of this study will be as follows: Chapter I will present the problem, purpose, procedure, description of the Clarmar Elementary Team Teaching Intermediate Program, definition of terms used, limitations of the study, and organization of the study; Chapter II will be a history and characteristics of team teaching by reviewing related literature; Chapter III will be a description of the findings gleaned from the questionnaire; Chapter IV will consist of the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE  
CONCERNING THE HISTORY AND CHARACTERISTICS OF TEAM TEACHING

Team teaching was conceived by Francis Keppel, formerly Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and by Judson T. Shaplin, formerly Assistant Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Through his years of leadership in implementing this concept, Dr. Robert H. Anderson, Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, is regarded by many to be "the father of team teaching."

The first comprehensive and perhaps best known elementary school team teaching project involving an entire school was the one established in cooperation with Harvard University at the Franklin School in Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1957-58. The elements included in the project were: a hierarchical organization of the teaching staff with increased specialization in subject areas; the provision of flexible grouping for instruction; the revision of a variety of curriculum areas as an adaptation to the new groupings; the introduction into teaching teams of paraprofessionals, part-time teachers, and lay resource people; and a variety of attempts to increase the use of mechanical aids in teaching.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly some programs will have elements which are similar to those included in conventional programs. Others may have characteristics of departmentalization, non-gradedness, or cooperative teaching as well as some that are unique to the team teaching movement.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert H. Johnson, Jr. and John J. Hunt, R for Team Teaching (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1970), p. 36.

Most schools will blend their own special "mix" of characteristics, adding one more vital ingredient, the spirit of its own staff, to produce a program which satisfies its own particular needs within the limits of its resources. Whether they are accepted or rejected, consideration should be given to certain points. Though not common to all team teaching programs, they are representative of team teaching aspects.

A problem being experienced by several schools seems to be the maintenance of attitudes that are desirable throughout the school year. After returning from summer vacations, teachers have a tendency to be more enthusiastic about their teaching and seem to look forward to a good year. However, pressures experienced during the year, such as parental complaints and student misbehavior, often dull initial enthusiasm. Teachers tend to become less favorable toward teaching and consequently are inclined to emphasize subject-centered practices. It appears possible that team teaching can contribute toward the maintenance of the initially favorable attitudes. A central concept in social psychology is that attitudes are formed and maintained through social interaction. For example, Krech, Crotchfield, and Ballachey state that "many of the attitudes of the individual have their source and support in the groups to which the individual gives his allegiance...And to maintain his attitudes, the individual must have the support of like minded persons." (Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey, 1962, p. 191) Festinger (1954) argued that people need "social reality" to evaluate their beliefs and opinions. Briefly, then, attitudes will be maintained only if the person has some source of support for them. Generally, attitudes are primarily supported best through interaction with other individuals who hold similar beliefs

and opinions. The hypothesis formed by these authors is one in which team teaching could and should provide social support for the initially favorable attitude of the teacher toward teaching as a career and toward child-centered educational practices. Because this social support is not readily available in a self-contained classroom, it could be assumed, justifiably, that initial attitudes of teachers would be better maintained in teaching teams than in self-contained classrooms.<sup>2</sup>

Bair and Woodward explain that a teaching team consists of from three to seven or more teachers jointly responsible for the instruction of 75-225 or more pupils in one or more grade or age levels.<sup>3</sup> It has been said by some that a team is actually a larger self-contained classroom with a half-dozen teachers responsible for the joint instruction of 150 pupils and, therefore, can be compared with the typical conventional classroom with one teacher and twenty-five pupils. The joint responsibility for instruction emphasizes an advantage that can never exist in a self-contained classroom with a single teacher. Basically, a complete team consists of teachers, pupils, and aides with varying room sizes available in which the team may teach and learn, and with the responsibility to make changes in the instructional practices required to satisfy specific individual needs of pupils by utilizing the varying abilities of the teachers.

Teams may have teachers assigned to different levels of responsibility, depending on their ability and experience, with

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<sup>2</sup>Marvin E. Shaw, Michael Stratil, and Gerald Reynolds, "Team Teaching: A Source of Support for Teacher Attitudes toward Teaching," Education (February and March, 1973).

<sup>3</sup>Medill Bair and Richard Woodward, Team Teaching in Action (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), p. 28.

higher salaries and higher status given to the senior teachers and the team leader. The team might include a team leader who would have charge of coordinating the entire team and who would be paid a substantial amount above the salary guide for teachers; one or more senior teachers with differing subject matter specialties who would be paid more than a regular teacher but less than the team leader; several regular classroom teachers; and one or more aides. Many schools use a non-hierarchical approach with emphasis on "natural" leadership. The difficulty with this approach is that coordination of the program is left largely to chance, without firm direction.

Team teaching programs emphasize the team, rather than the individual teacher, in the planning, teaching, and evaluating cycle. The stress is on the team as a unit, not the individual teacher, in planning a program for each child, in planning and carrying out the teaching, and in evaluating the results. In team work teachers learn not to be afraid to admit to each other that they don't know all the answers. Questions are asked, ideas are pooled, and help is given individually and as a team through a stimulating interaction among team members.<sup>4</sup>

In the classroom situation, teaching teams protect the professional autonomy of each teacher and stress the use of his unique abilities in the instruction of children. A team plans, evaluates, and works together, thus capitalizing on group strengths and individuality of each teacher. Many situations call for independent planning, teaching, and evaluating by a teacher within goals set by the team.

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<sup>4</sup>C.C. Carpenter, Jr. and Arthur L. Thayer, "Design for Team Teaching," Instructor (May, 1968), p. 67.

Team teachers work closely together during the same instructional period, are scheduled together for meetings, instruct the same students, and also plan and prepare together. As a result there is the disposition to be constantly together, perhaps at the expense of total staff rapport and morale.<sup>5</sup>

In many team teaching programs, each member of the team specializes in a different curriculum area and helps all members of this team plan, teach, and evaluate in the area of his specialty. Thus the teaching specialist is a teacher of teachers as well as a teacher of children. This system eliminates a number of the disadvantages of semi or complete departmentalization found in some team teaching programs since it permits most teachers to teach most subjects most of the time. It also eliminates the disadvantage of a teacher being interested primarily in teaching his subject, with only a secondary interest in the pupils. In some team teaching programs, each member is responsible for all the teaching on one subject. In either case, in forming a team it is essential to balance the specialties and interests of the team personnel.

All team teaching programs emphasize the effective utilization of the strengths of each member of the staff. Some teachers are much more adept in the use of certain instructional tools, more effective with certain types of grouping practices, and more skilled in the instruction of individuals, small groups, or large groups. It is possible that the specialist in a discipline is not always the best

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<sup>5</sup>Meyer, op. cit., p. 363.

teacher of certain aspects of the subject.<sup>6</sup>

Abilities of the staff are used to emphasize the best and thus to minimize the less than best. Under such an arrangement, it is much less likely that the weakness of a teacher will impede the learning opportunities of the student. How often has a parent said, "It was a lost year for my child. He had a weak teacher." Ironically enough, under a different situation, this teacher might well be the "right" one for another pupil. Careful regrouping eliminates the disadvantage of the so-called "weak teacher" by effectively employing his strengths.

As team teaching promotes non-gradedness within the school, so does non-gradedness promote team teaching. The theory of continuous pupil progress is basic to most team teaching programs. Certainly the idea that a fourth-grade child cannot teach a third-grade or fifth-grade child is one of the greatest tragedies in public education. An insistence that the needs of the individual child be rapidly identified and satisfied promotes non-gradedness.

Recently, an increasing number of educators have placed considerable emphasis upon the need for schools to individualize instruction. Many team teaching projects have interpreted this to mean that the individual student should be given increased responsibility for his own education.

The National Association of Secondary School Principals, supported by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, and with its chief spokesman and secretary, Dr. J. Lloyd Trump, appointed a

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<sup>6</sup>Bair and Woodward, op. cit., pp. 31-32.



Committee on Staff Utilization which has issued extensive reports on projects it has sponsored since 1958. The Committee on Staff Utilization suggested that 20 to 30 percent of a student's time should be spent in large-group activities. It also suggested that an equal amount of time should be spent in independent study. Almost without exception it has been accepted that the student can contribute more to his own education by taking on greater responsibility for its direction himself. There are obviously certain economies involved in such an arrangement, but few educators have felt it necessary to question whether or not and in what specific situations this arrangement is better for the student. A study recently completed in the University of Chicago Laboratory School indicates that without very careful supervision a student may become involved in serious difficulties while trying to work out his own program of study.<sup>7</sup>

Team teaching programs emphasize varying class sizes and class lengths based upon instructional objectives, context, techniques, and pupil needs. For years research has shown that proper class size is yet to be determined. The size of a class depends upon many more factors than an arbitrary ratio of pupils to teachers.

Class size and length of period are closely related to the flexible scheduling practices for pupils and teachers which are characteristic of many team teaching programs. In various programs it has been discovered that a class of any size can be fairly easily set up at any time with any group of youngsters. The difficulty lies in scheduling the correct teacher in the right space, with the most

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<sup>7</sup>Shaplin and Olds, Jr., op. cit., p. 14.

adequate materials, at the proper time, for the child or group of children who will benefit most.

Horizontal scheduling practices are common, permitting cross-grading within a team and cross-teaming within a school. Thus group size can be varied for skill development or appreciation and for remedial or advanced instruction. Moreover, increased flexibility in subgroups within a classroom is possible. The schedule becomes less flexible when different subjects are offered during the same period of time.

Many team teaching programs use paraprofessionals for non-professional tasks. For the first time, members of the teaching profession have the use of aides, as do all other professions. Clerical and teacher aides have proved to be notable additions to teams; they have taken over non-teaching tasks and frequently have carried them through in a better fashion than could the teachers. Shaplin tells us that it has become increasingly clear that a large fraction of the time, a teacher is performing non-professional duties--in some cases up to 40 percent of the total time spent in school. Such duties as collecting milk money and other funds, patrolling corridors, keeping attendance rosters, typing stencils, running the mimeograph machine, and supervising the lunchroom help account for this ludicrous state of affairs. Also, it has become clear that other tasks more closely associated with teaching, such as the routine grading of papers and tests, the administration of tests, the preparation of classroom materials and exhibits, and the supervision of study halls, of independent study, and of study with the help of mechanical teaching aids, can be performed by well-trained non-professional aides under

the direction of the teacher.<sup>8</sup> The elimination of routine responsibilities has allowed teachers to teach, to plan, to work together, to observe and to evaluate in a way rarely possible without aides. Many a teacher has rediscovered the joy of teaching children.

Most team teachers make more effective use of mechanical and electronic equipment. They are willing to use any device if it saves time for the teacher at no sacrifice of pupil learning or when it is more effective than the teacher alone. Time saved means more opportunity for working for or directly with the individual youngsters and for team or individual planning. Efficient use of equipment can be brought through planning so that the right equipment is available when needed.

Klaus and Glaser attempt to distinguish the team from other teaching groups: Teams are usually well-organized, highly structured, and have relatively formal operating procedures--as exemplified by a baseball team, an aircraft crew, or a ship control team. Teams generally:

1. are relatively rigid in structure, organization, and communication;
2. have well-defined positions or member assignments so that the participation in a given task by each individual can be anticipated;
3. depend on the cooperative or coordinated participation of several specialized individuals whose activities contain little overlap and who must each perform their tasks at least at some minimum level of proficiency;

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 76.

4. are involved with equipment or tasks requiring perceptual-motor activities;
5. can be given specific guidance on job performance based on a task-analysis of the equipment, mission, or situation of the team.<sup>9</sup>

These characteristics are representative of team teaching programs in action. Modifications, improvements, and refinements will continue to change them as more is learned about the success and failures of pupils in team teaching programs in the years ahead.

Overriding all these characteristics is a fierce spirit of unrest and dissatisfaction with current curricula, and a sense of personal commitment by team teaching personnel to improve the manner in which the needs of youngsters are met. This spirit cannot be expressed--it can only be felt. A visitor to a team teaching school system soon has a strong sense that here, perhaps more than in most schools, are teachers who deeply care about what happens to their pupils.

There are disadvantages to team teaching. Teams sometimes have difficulty in finding time to plan and evaluate. Another disadvantage comes from inadequate school facilities. Many buildings do not have the flexibility so there are inadequate offices for teachers and paraprofessionals, or inadequate room for large and small group instruction.

There have also been situations where less experienced teachers

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<sup>9</sup>David J. Klaus and Robert Glaser, Increasing Team Proficiency through Training: A Program of Research, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, American Institute for Research, 1960, pp. 2-3.

were given the responsibility of large group instruction. Feelings of inadequacy existed in this situation when presenting lectures before their peers. It also caused anxiety.

It is well to reiterate that team teaching characteristics cannot be rigidly defined, researched, or proved, for they are continually changing, as well it should be. Team teachers must continue to move forward for the good of the pupils, seizing opportunities to try new ideas and rejecting, accepting, or modifying them in the light of their effect. It is the small annual successes that build substantial improvements in each decade.

## CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION OF FINDINGS FROM  
QUESTIONNAIRE TO ADMINISTRATORS

Many educators seem to be looking to team teaching as a kind of remedy for all the problems education faces, and at the same time seem to feel it is synonymous with all that is new, exciting, and worthwhile in education. During the past decade the schools have faced many problems and have countered with a proliferation of attempts to provide for constructive change. It appears that the enthusiastic supporters of team teaching have succeeded in marshalling strong forces in education behind their banner and in making people dissatisfied with themselves if they are not part of the movement.

Today, young people demand schools that are relevant to their lives. Minority-group parents are asking for schools that guarantee for their children equality of educational performance. Business and industry need schools that provide the educational preparation necessary for a service-oriented economy. The makers of national policy look to the schools to fill the manpower needs of an advanced technological society. We ask schools to grapple with our social problems, poverty, delinquency, and racism. Schools have become central to the frenetic growth of society. We have asked schools to educate everyone and, simultaneously, to develop the maximum potential of the individual child.

With the dawning of this demanding age, education is thrust to the forefront of national interest. In an effort to better prepare the student for this new age, an increased emphasis was placed on team teaching.

Logic and research tell us that the teaming of teachers to achieve certain desirable instructional ends has become a highly accepted, fashionable mode of teaching--to date perhaps the most compelling and attractive instructional approach known to inquiry, transmittal of subject matter, use of teacher talent, and flexible grouping of students.

It was because of this rationale that this researcher embarked upon a study to identify data to support the concept of team teaching.

The views of team teaching held by administrators are crucial to the long-range success of the program, and attempts were made to obtain views and opinions from administrators who are presently engaged in team teaching organizations.

A questionnaire was sent to eleven elementary public schools within the state of Nebraska. A follow-up telephone conversation was held with some selected respondents. The total number responding to the questionnaire was ten. The interview sought to obtain from the administrators anecdotal materials illustrating effective and ineffective instances of team teaching. The questionnaire sought the following information:

1. their definition of team teaching;
2. the advantages and disadvantages to teachers and to students of team teaching;
3. the effect of team teaching on the use of instructional materials;
4. the effect of team teaching on teaching methods.

In addition, the administrators were asked to offer whatever comments they cared to make about what they liked best and least regarding

team teaching. Both the nature of the opinions of the administrators about team teaching and their comments are of interest.

### Definitions of Team Teaching

The administrators had some of the same difficulties defining team teaching that appear in the literature. Administrators showed a variety of definitions. Here are a few examples:

"working together, sharing ideas to benefit students"

"two or more staff working with a group of students--a real team effort"

"cooperative effort between teachers in which each has the responsibilities of researching and teaching similar material geared to the learner's level"

"a new approach to teaching"

"an organization in which maximum utilization of building facilities, teacher strengths, and interest is facilitated"

### Advantages and Disadvantages to Teachers and Students

In the questionnaire the administrators were asked to:

1. name major advantages of team teaching;
2. indicate the major limitations of team teaching.

They were also asked to discuss advantages for teachers and advantages for students. An analysis of all the questions revealed the following:

1. seven different disadvantages for students;
2. nine different advantages for students;
3. eight different disadvantages for teachers;
4. eight different advantages for teachers.

The following advantages and disadvantages were mentioned most frequently.



Disadvantages--Students

1. changing groups too often
2. difficulty in adjusting to so many teachers
3. lack of provision for individual needs
4. limited personal contact between student and teacher

Advantages--Students

1. flexible grouping
2. better provision for individual needs
3. opportunity to work with several teachers
4. the best expertise for the student both academically and personally
5. opportunity to progress at own rate
6. more opportunity to develop self-discipline and responsibility
7. alleviates personality conflicts between student and teacher

Disadvantages--Teachers

1. personality conflicts on teams
2. too time-consuming
3. loss of teacher individuality
4. schedule problems
5. working cooperatively with several people at all times

Advantages--Teachers

1. enable teachers to concentrate on one or two areas of teaching rather than preparing thoroughly for all areas each day
2. sharing ideas and techniques with others
3. better utilization of teacher strengths
4. group planning
5. greater opportunity to work with fellow professionals

6. greater challenge
7. opportunity for professional advancement
8. one teaches, the others support

The above tabulation indicates the major concerns and interests that the administrators had in team teaching. Generally speaking, they liked team teaching. They did not see many disadvantages to students. They seemed to think that flexible grouping and better provisions for individual needs and the opportunity to work with several teachers amounted to major advantages for the children. Being able to work cooperatively with several people at all times was mentioned on most questionnaires. It becomes clear, then, that personal relationships on teams were very important to those involved in team teaching. The comments categorized as "loss of teacher individuality" are, of course, distressing, though the responses on this were low.

"Sharing of ideas and techniques with others," "better utilization of teacher strengths," "more opportunity for professional growth and development" and "group planning" appeared very frequently indeed, and must be taken to represent the major advantage that the administrators saw to team teaching. It is very likely that precisely because they saw the sharing of ideas and the group planning--that is, the professional contact within the team--as so important, they were deeply concerned with personality conflicts and the quality of team work. To put this differently, these responses suggest that the teachers become deeply engaged, both emotionally and intellectually, with the teams they belong to. As one of the administrators said on his questionnaire, "I don't think there is much question that the absolute major benefit, overriding all of the other benefits, is the fact of

genuine professional communication or interaction." Or as another administrator said, "Other people spark you and you can spark other people through shared ideas and experiences. It's kind of like a chain reaction."

The degree of the engagement of the teachers with their team members was suggested by the negative comments that turned up in these questionnaires: "The overriding importance of teacher compatibility is a limitation. While in-service growth is an outcome at best, it is possible that members of the team might submerge their thoughts, ideas, emotions, and personalities to avoid conflict with an incompatible member of the team. If the incompatible member were a leader, the disaster could quite possibly be complete."

One administrator objected to the new idea of team teaching: "I think the real creative teacher is stymied and frustrated in a team teaching role because the team majority rules, and sometimes the majority may be a mediocre majority, which may overrule some really brilliant ideas that the rest of the group cannot quite grasp...If you have a terrifically superior staff, you may tend to bring the level of teaching down in a team teaching organization."

Comments from administrators, as a whole, were overwhelmingly favorable to team teaching.

#### The Effect of Team Teaching on Materials

The administrators saw the effect of team teaching on materials in substantially the same way that they had seen it on various other team teaching programs throughout the nation. Several administrators indicated that they thought such equipment as the overhead projector,

the tape recorder, the films and filmstrips were used more frequently in team teaching, and with greater success than they had known in the self-contained classroom. They pointed out that large group instruction requires the use of such equipment and that more materials were available in their team teaching programs than were usually available in the self-contained classroom situations. They attributed the extensive use of materials in class to the group planning sessions, where materials were frequently discussed.

#### The Effect of Team Teaching on Subject Matter

Most administrators expressed on their questionnaires that subject matter was handled in greater depth. However, one administrator did express it as "very little" effect. When they spoke of "depth," they seemed to mean the following: having a more flexible program, sharing ideas with others in the group planning, and using strengths or competencies in the team.

#### The Effect of Team Teaching on Teaching Methods

One of the questions on the questionnaire asked that the administrators indicate what effect team teaching had on their methods. It must be recognized that the term "method" is undefined in education. Most administrators did not define the term; their responses reflect its indefiniteness. One administrator felt there was more effect on style than method. Another believed there was more effectiveness toward meeting the individual needs of children. Administrators responded that teachers had greatly increased their audio-visual aids. One of these comments is typical of the others: "Teachers were using them more flexibly and doing more things with them. They were

also using more tapes and recordings." One administrator pointed out that there was more lecturing in the school than was usually the case in a self-contained classroom, because of the practice of large group instruction. Another administrator commented that the attitudes of the teachers seemed better in a team teaching situation. The following scattered comments were also made:

1. fewer workbooks used
2. less reliance on the textbook
3. greater use of committees
4. you adopt different methods by observing your colleagues
5. small instructional grouping

Some administrators commented beyond what was specifically asked for on the questionnaire. Some of these comments were:

1. team teaching allows "free" time to prepare
2. more time for checking papers
3. would never want to return to the self-contained room
4. team teaching is much too impersonal to students

All but one administrator answering the questionnaire replied, from their vantage point, that they favored team teaching over the self-contained classroom. In the one exception, the administrator mentioned she had never worked in any situation other than the team teaching. In no case was there any indication that administrators felt team teaching was easier than teaching in self-contained situations. Facts of this kind show that teachers are working harder than before, but that they are more pleased with the work they are doing. This surely must indicate then, that the quality of the work being done in the team teaching classrooms is improving also.

What Do You Like Most about Team Teaching?

Comments given most often on this question included:

1. being able to work with children at their own level of learning
2. shared experiences
3. working together with other teachers
4. shared expertise
5. variety in working with ability groups
6. sharing ideas

What Do You Like Least about Team Teaching?

Comments commonly expressed were:

1. finding time to confer with teammates
2. planning for each day
3. defend numbers for budget
4. make up of building can limit opportunity

Most administrators felt teachers needed more time to discuss students, ideas, and methods. This fact implies that team teachers must have scheduled time to plan and communicate.

## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY

The attitudes discovered in this investigation show clearly that team teaching has become firmly established on the educational horizon. Although no definite characteristics for the team teaching method are part of every team program, schools throughout the United States have adapted many of the same characteristics of team teaching to conform to their own individual requirements.

Teams consisting of three to seven teachers are being responsible for the instruction of 75-200 pupils. Teachers assigned to different levels of responsibility emphasize the team, rather than the individual teacher in planning, teaching and evaluating. Teams protect the autonomy of each teacher and stress the use of their unique abilities. Teachers may specialize in a specific curriculum area and team programs emphasize the effective utilization of the strengths of each member. Team teaching promotes non-gradedness as well as emphasizing varying class sizes and class lengths. Utilizing teacher aides and making more effective use of mechanical equipment also are strong characteristics of the team teaching programs throughout the country.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. Teachers are working harder than before but are more pleased with the work they are doing in team teaching.
2. Teachers feel there are greater provisions for individual needs and more opportunity for children to develop self-discipline.
3. The very foundation of team teaching appears to be the close and

and constant working together of the team members which cannot be accomplished without constant planning and evaluating of the work being done.

4. Successful personal relationships account for the success of team teaching.
5. Team teaching is not "disadvantageous" to children and evidence warrants further experimentation and refinement of procedure.

With reference to personality growth, pupil adjustment, and pupil achievement, results "are no less satisfactory" than accomplished in the more traditional setting. Dr. Robert Anderson has found no evidence that children suffer emotionally or academically or that they are being "lost" in the newer process.<sup>1</sup> Teachers have reacted favorably. Morse cites reactions from the parents of Franklin School children to show that they feel their children on all grade levels are both highly enthusiastic and beneficially affected by the program.<sup>2</sup>

6. Team teaching is not an organizational pattern, but rather an educational tool which seeks out and develops the strengths of all involved.
7. The term "team teaching" has actually taken on many meanings.

Goodlad and Rehage, in their article, "Unscrambling the Vocabulary of School Organization," in the book, Change and Innovation in Elementary School Organization, say:

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<sup>1</sup>Robert H. Anderson, "Team Teaching," NEA Journal, L (March, 1961), p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur D. Morse, Schools of Tomorrow--Today (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 191.



Communication would be enhanced if the term were used only in referring to ventures embracing all three of the following characteristics: (1) a hierarchy of personnel--team leader, master teacher, auxilliary teacher, teacher aide, intern teacher, clerk and so forth; (2) a delineation of staff function based on differences in preparation, personal interests, and so on, or on the kinds of learning activities planned; (3) flexibility in grouping, embracing all the students under supervision of a team.

8. A team structure without the hierarchy seems to work as well in certain situations.

There are many teams composed of peer teachers, previously due to lack of planning for mobility within the team. Frequently, these teams of peer teachers elect one of the group to serve as team leader for a specified period of time, and to work as liason to the administrator and the other teams in the building. This method obviously has the advantage of offering leadership experience to every staff member involved on the team.

9. Regardless of what definition is used, team teaching, cooperative teaching, or associated teaching, the concept heightens the possibility for each member to grow professionally, increasing the knowledge and capability of the whole staff to the benefit of all students through the implicit agreement of the team members to attempt to solve educational problems jointly.
10. There must be more specialization in staffing the team teaching school in order to recognize and develop the strengths and skills of individual teachers.
11. Even after a program has been organized, it should be flexible so that it can be changed as circumstances and personnel change.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The administration, staff, parents, and board of education should support the concept.
2. Team members must be compatible.
3. There must be adequate time for team members to plan and evaluate their program.
4. Facilities must be appropriate.
5. Each teacher should share material with his co-worker to keep curriculum revision current according to the latest research.
6. Teachers should be allowed time to observe and evaluate each other.

Based upon the findings, this researcher supports and endorses the concept of team teaching and recommends its implementation in school systems where it can be accepted and applied.

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APPENDIX A

June 8, 1977

Ron Bernth  
Director of Elementary Education  
Millard Public Schools  
12801 L  
Omaha, Nebraska 68137

Dear Ron:

I am doing research for my Education Specialist Degree on team teaching. I would appreciate it if you could send the enclosed questionnaires to your principals engaged in team teaching.

Enclosed, please find a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Thank you for your time and cooperation regarding this.

Sincerely yours,

Joel G. Christiansen  
Clarmar Principal

JGC:db

APPENDIX B

TEAM TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Give your definition of team teaching.

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2. Identify some major advantages of team teaching.

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3. Identify some limitations to team teaching.

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4. Name advantages for teachers of team teaching.

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5. Name disadvantages for teachers.

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6. List advantages for students in the team teaching organizations.

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7. List disadvantages for students.

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8. What effect do you feel team teaching has on the use of instructional materials?

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9. What effect do you feel team teaching has on the organization of subject matter?

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10. What effect do you feel team teaching has on teaching methods?

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11. Do you favor team teaching over self-contained classroom? YES NO

12. Has the work load been heavier in team teaching than it was in the self-contained classroom?

YES NO

13. What do you like most about team teaching in your school?

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14. What do you like least about team teaching in your school?

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