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# *Teachers and Teacher Candidates Learning Together: Reported Ideas Regarding a Co-Teaching Model*

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## **Abstract:**

A recurring issue in science teacher education is how to support teachers using student-centred scientific inquiry projects. This study investigates the first year of a three-year project (Inquire Together) that aims to support teacher candidate/teacher mentor teams using student-centred scientific inquiry projects while co-teaching during practicum. Co-teaching involves two or more teachers working together, co-planning, co-instructing and co-reflecting, for the benefit of students and to support each other's development as teachers. The steps in the first year of the Inquire Together project involved the following: a) developing a co-teaching model for our practicum in a two-day workshop, follow up focus groups and interviews; b) modelling student-centred scientific inquiry opportunities for teacher candidates and teachers; and c) supporting

two teacher candidate/teacher mentor co-teaching teams implementing this pedagogy with practicum classes. The Covid-19 pandemic led to co-teaching teams moving to online teaching part-way through practicum, and students continuing their projects at home. We used a case study approach to investigate the affordances and constraints of Inquire Together for supporting teachers using student-centred scientific inquiry projects. Data included video and audio recordings of the workshop, focus groups, interviews, co-teacher planning meetings, high school classes and co-teacher reflection meetings, as well as co-teachers' unit and lesson plans and online communication. Our initial findings from thematic analysis indicate the importance of the following five elements: time together for co-teaching teams outside the classroom (for planning and reflection); co-teachers developing mutual understanding; making equity between co-teachers visible for students; communication; and both teachers' engagement in all activities.

**Keywords:** co-teaching; science inquiry; teacher education

### **Biographical Notes**

Carol Rees is an associate professor at Thompson Rivers University British Columbia. Her research interests include supporting student-centred scientific inquiry, teacher-student interactions and co-teaching. She is currently working on a three-year research study entitled "Supporting Learner-Centred Pedagogy and Dialogic Teaching Through Co-Teaching" with Wolff-Michael Roth and Colette Murphy.

Rupinder Deol Kaur is a research assistant at Thompson Rivers University. She has a master's in psychology and a master's in education. Her central interest is social and emotional learning.

Colette Murphy is an author of several books on co-teaching and she has delivered workshops worldwide. She is a professor at Trinity College Dublin, in Ireland. She is the director of the STEM centre there. She has been a teacher educator for 25 years. Her research centres on science learning and teaching, at all levels.