Inclusion at the Secondary Level: Ensuring Factors for a Successful Co-teaching Program

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As a result of federal legislation such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) of 2004, there has been a push for students with disabilities to be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This would provide the opportunity and accessibility for students with disabilities to be educated alongside their nondisabled peers who are in the general education classroom under the supervision of highly qualified teachers (Bouck, 2007; Foote, Kilanowski-Press & Rinaldo, 2010; Mastropieri, Mcduffie, & Scruggs, 2007; Wilson, 2006; Zigmond, Kloo, & Volonino, 2009). As a means of meeting these mandates and providing these services, many schools and educators are implementing inclusive practices with the primary model being co-teaching. "Co-teaching is one of the least exclusionary and potentially most supportive of the setting options for students with disabilities, and, as such, it is being increasingly chosen as the trend toward inclusion advances" (Wilson, 2006, p. 203).

According to Cook and Friend (1995), the definition of co-teaching is, "two or more professionals delivering substantive instruction to a diverse, or blended, group of students in a single physical space" (p. 2). The intention is to "focus on the somewhat unique possibilities that occur from the different but complementary perspectives of the professionals involved: General educators who specialize in understanding, structuring, and pacing curriculum for groups of students are paired with special educators who specialize in identifying unique learning needs of individual students and enhancing curriculum and instruction to match these needs" (Cook & Friend, 2007, p. 2).

When implemented correctly and with the right supports, co-teaching is very beneficial for everyone involved. There is a substantial amount of research available about co-teaching practices but few studies in regards to the impact that co-teaching practices has on student outcomes. However, there is evidence that teachers believe in the positive effect that co-teaching has on student achievement. Mastropieri, Mcduffie, and Scruggs (2007), discussed how Welch, Brownell, and Sheridan (1999) reviewed over 40 articles that related to team teaching and concluded, "that teachers report positive attitudes toward various forms of co-teaching; however, there was limited knowledge about student outcomes, and a lack of empirical evidence supporting co-teaching" (p. 2).

Further, in their metasynthesis, Mastropieri et al. (2007) pointed out that there were benefits of co-teaching for both teachers and students. They even provided several examples from various research studies found in their metasynthesis. The benefits that they mentioned were: teachers reported that they benefited professionally from co-teaching experiences (felt supported by their partner and learned from them); teacher collaboration became a model for students; students without disabilities benefitted as cooperation increased with students in co-taught classes, students with disabilities were challenged with exposure to the general education curriculum and peers who may exemplify appropriate behavior; academic benefits for students also resulted because of teacher attention (smaller teacher to student ratio).

The most common practice is to have a general education teacher and a special education teacher working together in a general education setting teaching mixed students with and without disabilities. Ideally, they should plan, instruct, assess, grade, and manage the class together. Mastropieri et al. (2007) identified the results that Weiss

and Brigham (2002) concluded in their research, "considerable variability was apparent in co-taught classes. However, the special education teacher typically was responsible for modifying instruction, behavior management, and monitoring student progress; whereas the general education teacher was responsible for the content of instruction" (p.2). Unfortunately, most co-teachers are not compatible and are unwilling, not able to, or do not know how to plan, instruct, assess, grade or even manage classes together (Cook & Friend, 1995; Mastropieri et al., 2007; Rosati, 2010). Co-teaching is very complex because of the variability in co-taught classes as well as the factors that can impact it. It could make the co-teaching experience an effective one or an ineffective one. In the latter case, teachers along with students will not benefit from the co-teaching experience. As a matter of fact, it would undermine and do more harm when co-teaching is not implemented correctly. Students with disabilities might not receive the necessary supports that they need in order to be successful in the general education classroom setting. Just putting everyone in the right place does not ensure that everything will go accordingly. We must look at the factors that are necessary to ensure success of co-teaching and make certain that practices reflect its ideals.

The difference in school settings, teacher's personalities and philosophies, and individual student needs will necessitate a non-uniform approach to implementing co-teaching practices. "Indeed, there are a variety of ways that school districts and co-teachers implement the model. The teachers' teaching abilities, actual roles in the classroom, how and when they plan, what and how lessons are taught, what accommodations and modifications are made, how student knowledge is assessed, and how conflicts are resolved are generally unique to school districts, schools, and individual

pairs of teachers" (Wilson, 2006, p. 200). Challenges of students' disabilities and skill efficiencies add to the complexities as well. These are all factors that attribute to how effective the co-teaching team is as well as a determinant for student success and achievement. Mastropieri et al. (2007) identified several needs or factors that teachers believe needed to be met in order for co-teaching to be available.

The identified factors were co-teacher compatibility (personalities and philosophies), clear teacher role expectations (parity, subordinate roles and content knowledge), Shared classroom management, grading, assessment, and Instructional delivery. The biggest factor was administrative support. This factor is divided into five parts: professional development (training), evaluation (feedback), and financial support (funding), volunteerism (not assign teachers to co-teach but let them volunteer to work with a partner), and planning time (structuring it). Identifying these factors is a step in the right direction to control or influence these factors to the advantages of our teachers and students so that these factors are positive impacts on the co-teaching program.

The purpose of this literature review is to identify and examine what inclusion delivery models are being implemented, what co-teaching looks like, how it is being implemented, what implications for practice are being suggested, and specifically what factors help to determine success of a co-teaching program. After reviewing this literature review, administrative and educational professionals may have a better understanding of what the current research suggests, what current practices are being implemented, and what factors will help to foster a successful co-teaching program. They can further use the information from the discussions and practice the implications that are suggested at the end of the literature review. Hopefully with this information, administrators may

guide and evaluate their own co-teaching programs, train their staff, and structure the

linking mechanisms that are necessary to support their co-teachers to ensure a successful

co-teaching program.

<div align="center">**Summary and Analysis**</div>

Foote, C.J., Kilanowski-Press, L., & Rinaldo, J. R. (2010). Inclusion classrooms and

   teachers: A survey of current practices. *International Journal of Special*

   Education, 25(3), 43-56.**

Summary

  In this article, Foote, Kilanowski-Press, and Rinaldo (2010) attempted to

investigate the range of current inclusion practices that were being implemented across

the state of New York. The researchers focused on documenting certain demographics of

inclusion classrooms such as class size, the number of students with disabilities and the

severity of those disabilities, along with teacher characteristics; I primarily looked at the

program models being implemented to determine which inclusive practice delivery model

was most commonly utilized. "Aptly titled, inclusion, as an educational placement, offers

a variety of service delivery formats designed to educate students in the general education

environment…Unfortunately districts and schools vary greatly in the inclusion models

that they implement, making it very difficult to identify best practices" (Foote et al.,

2010, p. 45). However, the two primary inclusion models that were being implemented

were identified as consultant teacher services or co-teaching. Consultant teacher services

is when a special education teacher works directly with students one-on-one/small

groups or indirectly by providing instructional support to general education teachers;

such as, modifying the instructional methods to meet the needs of students in the class

that have disabilities (Foote et al., 2010). The result was that more teachers in the state of New York were implementing the consultant teacher services model rather than the co-teaching model (i.e., 51 of the 71 teachers).

The research methodology was a descriptive inquiry. They wanted to find out what inclusive practices were being implemented in New York State. Consent letters were sent out to 150 different school principals from a database that randomly selected these schools. The principals were to determine how many teachers they had in their building that were working in inclusion settings. Then the correct numbers of surveys were mailed to the principal to distribute to their inclusion teachers. 71 inclusion teachers turned in completed surveys: 39 from rural, 29 from suburban, and two from urban settings; 36 from elementary, five from middle school, and 27 from secondary. Independent sample t-tests and a chi-square analysis were conducted with 11 tables to help provide a descriptive analysis.

Critical Analysis

As stated before, I primarily focused on the inclusion model that was being implemented in the classrooms, teacher consultant services (one-to one student assistance, small group instruction, and planning) and co-teaching. The results were surprising to me because I had expected that the schools had moved to a more inclusive model that supported the push for putting students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment, the general education classroom. Unfortunately, 51 of the 71 teachers were utilizing consultant teacher services. Instructional practices such as one-to-one student assistance, small group instructions, and planning assistance for teachers were more prevalent for inclusion teachers than co-teaching. The second most prevalent type of

support given to inclusion teachers were from teacher assistants and volunteers. "The instructional approach that may most clearly exemplify inclusive practice is the least utilized method of LRE mandate implementation. Other frequently cited forms of support such as small group instruction, one to one support and planning largely involve push in special education teacher support as opposed to the integration of special education expertise into the regular education curriculum on a continuous basis" (Foote et al., 2010, p. 53).

According to Foote et al. (2010), some reasons for this could have been a result of certain factors related to the "ease of implementation, school building infrastructure, administrative support and staffing. Conceptualization of consultant/consultative teacher supports as being attached to particular IEP students as opposed to constant fixtures within particular classrooms may be another consideration. The assignment of support to students rather than students and classrooms may perpetuate the predominance of consultation, planning, and group oriented service provision over co-teaching" (p. 53).

Although co-teaching was the least reported type of inclusion model delivered, the researchers found that these classes had larger numbers of students with disabilities than those classes that utilized direct teacher consultation services. The least inclusive form of instruction, which was directly working with students one-to-one, was the most prevalent type of support that was provided in inclusive classrooms. These findings are shocking because I had expected co-teaching to be the prevalent instructional practice. This descriptive inquiry was published in 2010, which is two years ago. Also, the practices that they are implementing are not putting their students with disabilities in the LRE. At the same time, it allows me to reflect on the results and wonder why they have

not made a more aggressive move towards inclusion practices, preferably in utilizing the co-teaching model. However, this study serves as a great step and a baseline for administrators and educational professionals to see what inclusive practices their teachers and schools are currently implementing.

The methodology was simplistic because it was just a descriptive inquiry; the research design is a descriptive non-experimental research. The researchers had done a thorough job. They helped to provide a description and status of the current inclusive practices in the State of New York. They collected detailed data and used it to provide a clear picture of current practices. There were also several limitations in the study that the authors mentioned. One of the limitations is the small sample size. Another is the lack of representation from middle school teachers and urban teachers. Something else that the researchers should have provided would have been a sample survey that was given to the inclusion teachers. It would have allowed readers to see the questions, grasped the data better, and even replicate the study if they wanted.

For future studies, the researchers should follow this study to determine which inclusion service delivery model was more effective in increasing student performance and learning, teacher consultant services or co-teaching. Another study should focus on the reasons why they are using the teacher consultant services model as opposed to co-teaching; the reason they provided in the study were not adequate enough to justify why they have not complied with federal mandates. They should have included teachers' perceptions and rationale as to why they were implementing and using their specific service delivery model. Overall, it was a well done descriptive non-experimental research because it achieved its purpose in describing the current status of New York's current

inclusive practices. Identifying what inclusive practices are being implemented is a great start in the evaluation process of building an effective co-teaching program.

Bouck, E.C. (2007). Co-teaching…not just a textbook term: Implications for practice. *Preventing School Failure, 51*(2), 46-51.

Summary

In this article, Bouck (2007) followed the journey of two teachers, a general education teacher and a special education teacher, co-teaching together for their first year. Since it was their first year together, they had yet to develop their relationship. She examined co-teaching and attempted to answer what co-teaching looked like in this particular case study, what factors of co-teaching were illustrated, and what could be learned from this case and added to the pedagogical literature. The findings in the case study were supportive of the literature on successful co-teaching. The findings in the study were that co-teaching was a complex relationship that required the two teachers to negotiate their roles. They had to construct a relationship while addressing any tensions or problems that may arise. Some factors of co-teaching that were illustrated in this case are the importance and complexity of co-teacher's relationships, planning time, volunteering, and the tensions that could result throughout the process of co-teaching. The author also added to the pedagogical literature the various roles that co-teachers must play and the different spaces that the co-teachers must share and divide.

Bouck's (2007) design was a qualitative case study. The setting was a middle school located in an urban school district in the state of Michigan. The participants, as mentioned above were two US History teachers, one a general education and the other a special education teacher. Since it was their first year of co-teaching together, they were

selected for the study. They both co-taught before and had negative experiences. They are both Caucasian but of the opposite sex. The methods of data collection were primarily derived from classroom observations and informal teacher interviews, individually or together.

Bouck (2007) also took field notes two to three times a week for 9 weeks. The data were then put in chronological order and pertinent themes were developed that were relevant to the research questions with the use of inductive data analysis. She then analyzed the data by reading the entire data set and writing down emerging themes. This process was repeated several times while she continued to expand and condense the categories. Once the categories were created, Bouck (2007) was able to condense or expand the categories and begin coding. She then looked for evidence in the data collected to support these categories.

Critical Analysis

The author did not seem to have answered the questions about what co-teaching looked like in this study other than the fact that it was complex. What could be learned from this case that can be added to pedagogical literature is that there were several roles available for co-teachers. Another result was that teachers had to assume several roles as co-teacher. Some roles that co-teachers were identified in by Bouck (2007) were "instructor large class, instructor to individuals, disciplinarian to large class, disciplinarian to individuals, classroom manager, supporter, gatekeeper or authority, and confidant or friend" (48). Three spaces were also identified in which teachers must share and divide: physical space (the classroom), instructional space, and management of discipline space (Bouck, 2007). These roles and spaces identified were not new to the

face of co-teaching. I think the Bouck (2007) just came up with her own categories because these were challenges that all co-teachers must overcome to be effective.

The two teachers also shared some common experiences together that were considered beneficial for co-teaching to be successful. They volunteered to be co-teachers together, had the same philosophies about behavior management and learning, had unpleasant experiences with co-teaching in the past, and they even shared a common planning time together. Even though some of the factors that were necessary to ensure success in co-teaching were established for them, there still existed problems and tensions. They did not consistently utilize the common planning time. The special education teacher also admitted to taking a lesser role than the regular education teacher. She even felt that there was a lack of respect and parity as students treated her in a secondary role.

This study allowed me to reflect on how teachers should consider the eight different roles that are available and how assuming certain roles affect his/her co-teaching partner. At the same time, they must understand that by working together, they can divide these roles between each other and even become more effective in the roles that they do play. Teachers must also determine the affects of the three spaces that are present and how they can share and divide the physical space (share or divide the classroom space), instructional space (planning and delivery of instruction), and discipline or management space (mutual responsibility for all students and their behaviors). Most importantly, teachers must become aware of the constraints and tensions that may exist as a result of co-teaching. They must meet together to determine their roles and expectations and create parity so that no one teacher feels the lesser. This will include having to discuss with their

teaching partner difficult conversations that pertain to planning, grading, assessing, and managing the classroom and ensuring that the ideal concepts of co-teaching are being met. It was a well done qualitative study that provided insightful information in viewing the challenges and tensions that co-teachers face as different roles and spaces. One thing that they should have added was information about teacher training. Whether teachers had any training in co-teaching and if so, to what extent, would have been a factor that would have impacted teacher performance.

Bouck (2007) did a great job explaining the methodology in the research design. Her setting, participants, data collection and analysis were clear and thoroughly explained. One of the limitations that she acknowledged was that the study began in the middle of the school year as opposed to the beginning of the school year. She was only able to observe the latter part of their first year. It is likely that the participants would have had more challenges at the beginning of the year that was not documented. She missed out on the most crucial times during their co-teaching process and experience. Another limitation that she acknowledged was that the study had only focused on two participants and that it was only one relationship. The sample size was incredibly small. However, she believed that the relationship and case study could be generalized to others and larger case studies. Certain incidences that occurred in this classroom and relationship cannot be generalized with other co-teachers and classrooms. Recommendations for future studies is similar to the previous article, which is to find data on student outcomes positively or negatively impacting the achievement of students in co-taught classrooms.

Magiera, K. & Simmons, R.J. (2007). Evaluation of co-teaching in three high schools within one school district: How do you know when you are truly co-teaching? *Teaching Exceptional Children Plus, 3*(3), 1-11.

Summary

In this article, Magiera and Simmons (2007) followed a school district as they attempted to review their co-teaching program in three high schools. Administrators wanted to see what co-teaching looked like at the classroom level. They decided to have an independent external evaluation of the co-teaching practices to see if teachers were truly co-teaching. Two university faculty members who conducted research in co-teaching were invited to evaluate the three different high schools in the district. They evaluated teachers based on two critical questions: "1) What does co-teaching in action look like at the secondary level in this school district? 2) How are teachers co-planning and making instructional decisions at the secondary level?" (Magiera & Simmons, 2007, p. 3).

The researchers observed three or more different co-taught classes from each school. This totaled ten classes and ten different pairs of co-teachers. They would observe the class and then interview the teachers in the same day. These observations were "documented and rated using the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching, a tool that systematically looks for trends and patterns in co-teaching" (Magiera & Simmons, 2007, p. 5). The tool is used by the researchers to rate teachers based on 25 quality indicators that help to examine co-teaching. Each individual independently rated the co-teaching pair and then compared their scores with each other. Then they averaged all the scores of teachers from the same school. They also

independently interviewed the co-teachers; one researcher interviewed all the general education teachers while the other one interviewed the special education teachers (Magiera & Simmons, 2007).

Magiera and Simmons (2007) reported that co-teaching is interpreted differently in each school. As a result, co-teaching looks differently in each school because co-teachers are both planning and adapting the instruction or they are not planning together. Having a uniform standard, such as the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching, will allow schools to identify what co-teaching should look like and what it does look like in their school. The quality of co-teaching observed is based on a five point scale. Co-teaching is considered a developed model if it receives a range of four to five points. Co-teaching that is observed occasionally is considered progressing and receives a range of two to three points. Co-teaching is considered emerging when it is rarely observed and receives a range of 0-1 points.

Using the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-teaching, Magiera and Simmons (2007) rated each school differently. School A was rated 4.3 on the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator of Co-Teaching and is considered a developed school. School B was rated a 2.0 and was considered progressing. School C was rated a 1.7 and considered emerging. The results of the interviews were consistent with the rating scale results. Co-teachers in school A shared with the researchers that they had the same roles and responsibilities for students, grading, and lesson planning. Teachers took turns leading the instruction in the classroom. In school C, co-teachers shared that special education teachers rarely helped with planning the lessons. Instead, they were intent only on helping students develop certain skills (i.e. writing).

Magiera and Simmons (2007) concluded the study by providing several recommendations for co-teaching practices based on their observations and interviews, along with the literature on co-teaching: 1) Solicit volunteers for co-teaching. 2) Training should be provided for co-teachers. 3) Co-teacher pairs should be kept together, especially if they are effective as a team. 4) Co-teaching pairs should observe other co-teaching pairs. 5) Co-teachers should have regular planning periods. If that is not possible they should have half-day planning sessions or summer planning time scheduled into the calendar. 6) Special education co-teachers should be members of a content department, particularly in their content field.

The research design was an evaluative assessment. The participants were 20 high school co-teachers who taught English, social studies, science, and math. The setting was three different high schools in a district. The data were collected through classroom observations and teacher interviews. In one day, the researchers, observed the co-taught classes and had individual follow-up interviews with the general education teacher and the special education teacher. The tool used was the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-teaching. The tool provided 25 measurable quality indicators that would help to guide classroom practices in co-taught classrooms. It was used as the uniform standard for co-teaching practices and provided a rating scale to help analyze whether quality co-teaching was occurring in the classroom (Magiera & Simmons, 2007). Interviews helped to determine how co-teachers were planning and making instructional decisions. The researchers did not acknowledge any limitations in their study nor did they make any recommendations for future studies. Instead, they provided several implications for future co-teaching practices.

Critical Analysis

The study was quite interesting because Magiera and Simmons (2007) had evaluated the co-teaching programs at all three schools based on the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching that they created. It was also frustrating because they did not provide a sample evaluation tool. Also, they only shared four of the 25 quality indicators in the article. It is difficult to determine what their uniform standard of co-teaching practices are when they do not share that information in the study. They even made it sound as if the evaluation tool was a big deal and everyone should know what it was. As a result, it was difficult to determine how they could have answered the first research question. They just stated that co-teaching looks different in each school but failed to share what it should consistently look like. The interviews were helpful in helping them determine how teachers were planning together and making instructional decisions. However, the tools that were used to gather data were not clearly described. They should have had developed some evaluation tool for how teachers were planning together and making instructional decisions. The implications for future studies that the researchers provided were consistent with the other research studies and what research literature suggests as elements or factors for ensuring success in co-teaching practices.

The research design is considered an evaluative study because it is an assessment of the co-teaching program at this particular school district. The method of study was mixed, quantitative and qualitative. The setting was three different high schools in a suburban setting which were renamed. High school A was the smallest high school in the district serving a student population ranging from 1,000 to 1,400 students. The general education teachers in the co-taught classes were usually the department chairs. High

school B was the largest high school in the district. Co-teaching had various

interpretations at the school. High school C was an open high school, constructed without

any permanent was in the classrooms. In terms of consistent interpretations of co-

teaching, this school was the least consistent (Magiera & Simmons, 2007). The

participants were selected by the district's identification of co-taught classes and co-

teaching pairs. Participants were 20 co-teachers, ten special education teachers and ten

general education teachers. The setting and participants were adequately described. There

were some demographic information about the setting and background information about

the co-teachers that would have been helpful to the study if it was added (i.e. severability

of student disabilities and previous teacher training).

The circumstances under which the data were collected were completely

described. More of the descriptions are detailed in the paragraphs above. The researchers

observed 10 different co-taught classes and used the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator

Model of Co-Teaching as their primary tool to gather quantitative data about co-teaching

practices in the classroom. This was the tool used to determine what co-teaching looked

like in the classroom. They then interviewed the co-teachers later in the day. This was the

tool used to gather qualitative information about how teachers planned and made

instructional decisions. The tools were not adequately described nor did they provide

sample interview questions or a sample of the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator model

of Co-Teaching. The descriptions that they provided about the methodological tools were

limited and did not offer a detailed description. No limitations were acknowledged but

Magiera and Simmons (2007) indicated that one pair of co-teachers were not prepared for

their observation. Thus, they were removed from the study. Some limitations that I

thought the study might have had were the fact that it was one class observation per pair of teachers; the observation was only 90 minutes long. It is a short amount of time to determine if co-teachers meet all 25 quality indicators. Is it possible to determine that in such a short amount of time? No one would know unless they were familiar with the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching because the researchers only shared four of the 25 quality indicators.

Magiera and Simmons (2007) did not make recommendations for future studies. However, from this study, it would be interesting to look into the evaluation tool that they were using and determine how effective and accurate it is in determining quality co-teaching and if that model could be replicated with the same results in a different setting. It would be similar to determining a set of uniform factors that must exist in order to ensure that co-teaching is successful.

Mastropieri, M. A., Mcduffie, K. A., & Scruggs, T.E. (2007). Co-teaching in inclusive classrooms: A metasynthesis of qualitative research. *Exceptional Children, 79*(4), 392-416.**

Summary

Mastropieri, McDuffie, and Scruggs (2007) provided a qualitative metasynthesis in which they investigated 32 qualitative studies and integrated the themes that emerged from these various studies. They were able to identify 69 categories that represented facets of the co-teaching process. From there, they created four superordinate categories and divided the 69 original categories under the four superordinate categories. As a result, each superordinate category had at least 12 original category codes. The four superordinate category codes are: "expressed benefits of co-teaching, expressed needs for

success in co-teaching, special and general education teacher roles in co-teaching, and

how instruction is delivered in co-taught classes" (Mastropieri et al., 2007, p. 395).

The results of the four superordinate coding categories are shared by Mastropieri

et al. (2007) with specific examples from the 32 studies they used. These are the major

themes found in these categories.

1) Benefits of co-teaching: Everyone involved in the co-teaching experience

benefitted from it. Co-teachers had reported receiving professional growth and support

from their partner. Students without disabilities benefitted as they were able to

collaborate with other students in the class and as co-teachers modeled collaboration.

Students with disabilities benefitted as they received exposure to the general education

curriculum, exposure to models of appropriate behavior from their peers, and more

individual attention from two teachers (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

Along with the benefits of co-teaching, Mastropieri et al. (2007) discussed some

concerns that were expressed in this category. One concern was the skill level of students

with disabilities whose needs could not be met in the general education classroom setting.

Another concern is the requirements that school policies may have that require these

students, who are lacking in skill level to be in the general education classroom. Two

more concerns dealt with administrators forcing teachers into co-teaching roles and

classrooms that were heavily loaded with students who had behavior problems or

learning disabilities (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

2) Expressed needs of co-teachers: In order for co-teaching to be successful,

teachers' needs must be met first. The most critical need identified was administrative

support because it was also found to be linked to other needs. This support ranged from

providing professional development opportunities to providing structured planning time. The second most important need was for the co-teacher to pick the right partner. Teachers should volunteer to be co-teachers and be able to pick the partner that they want because teacher compatibility is one of the most critical factors to co-teaching success (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

3) Teacher roles: The most commonly used instructional model in co-taught classrooms is one teach, one assist. This coincides with and probably determines how the teacher roles are commonly defined. If one teacher teaches, it is most often the general education teacher since he/she is usually considered the content specialist. The other teacher who is assisting is commonly the special education teacher who ends up in a lesser, subordinate role. Sometimes the general education teachers might be territorial as special education teachers enter their domain and would more than likely lack the knowledge in that content subject (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

4) Instructional delivery in co-taught classrooms: General education teachers tend to plan instruction gear towards whole group instruction while special education teachers focus on individual needs. Whole group instruction is usually the norm in the general education classroom setting. As a result, special education teachers will have few opportunities to share their expertise. Instead, it is often assumed that the special education teacher can focus on monitoring students and managing behavioral issues in the class. Cooperative learning and peer tutoring were being effectively used in most co-taught classrooms (Mastropieri et al., 2007). .

The research design was a qualitative research synthesis. Mastropieri et al., (2007) looked for themes and categories found in 32 different qualitative case studies. As a

result of the numbers of studies involved, the setting is broader and participant sample size is much larger. "These reports involved as participants 454 co-teachers, 42 administrators, 142 students, 26 parents, and 5 support personnel" (Mastropieri et al., 2007, p. 397). The settings were quite broad as the geographically diverse schools spanned throughout different regions of the United States, Canada, and Australia. The studies also included a variety of grade levels (i.e., preschool, elementary, middle and high schools) and locations (i.e., urban, suburban, and rural). Data collection consisted of establishing selection criteria for the research studies to be included in the metasynthesis. Selection requirements necessitated that the studies included had to utilize qualitative research methods as its primary methodology. Mixed methods studies could also be included but the primary method still had to be qualitative. Studies also were required to have had focused on co-teaching as a primary research question. "Reports included in this investigation had been reported in journals, dissertations, and master's research reports. Dissertations and theses were included if they met quality standards employed in this synthesis" (Mastropieri et al., 2007, p. 395). After the selection criteria process, the researchers searched various electronic databases and journals to find 32 studies that met the requirements.

A tool that was used by Mastropieri et al. (2007) to help code and categorize the qualitative data was a software program called NVivo (a.k.a. QSR NUD*ST). The data analysis included coding for numerous setting and demographic variables. They used investigator triangulation since it was required that at least two coders had to agree on all of the coding decisions. Then all reports were saved as separate documents in NVivo. The researchers also read every report, at least once before implementing the coding

procedures. Throughout this process, they took notes and highlighted information in the text that was considered significant. As a result, they identified at least 69 categories that represented various facets of the co-teaching experience. Eventually, the 69 categories were divided into the four superordinate categories that were created as the center of the study (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

Critical Analysis

The metasynthesis was fascinating for me. It was a stronger study than most because it was able to pull over 32 different studies together and identify the themes that had emerged from all those studies. The four superordinate categories were discussed in great detail with examples given from specific studies. This helps to further strengthen and confirm the consistent results that other studies and what research literature has identified to be factors that will help to determine success or failure in the co-teaching process. If these factors have been identified as prevalent among so many studies, perhaps it could be considered consistent factors that must be addressed with every co-teaching experience. We must further look at these categories to see its influence on the co-teaching process. Then it is possible to put the right factors in place to influence co-teaching practices in positive ways. If teachers perceive that co-teaching is beneficial to all, have their expressed needs met, develop clear expectations and teacher-roles, and is knowledgeable and diverse in delivering instruction, teacher and student performance and outcomes are expected to increase greatly.

This was a well-done qualitative research synthesis. However, the setting and participants were not completely described. Mastropieri et al. (2007) did not describe in great detail because the setting was too broad and the participants were diverse and many.

The circumstance under which the data were collected was clearly described. Some of the steps are mentioned in the above paragraphs. Mastropieri et al. (2007) explained the requirements that are needed for the research studies to have been included in their study. They took measures to obtain and utilize only research articles that were given the quality standard. This meant that the research studies that were included were trustworthy and credible. The "studies had gone through considerations such as triangulation, disconfirming evidence, prolonged field engagement, detailed description , member checks, and peer debriefing… All studies included had also been found to be acceptable by some form of peer review whether an editorial board, dissertation or thesis committee" (Mastropieri et al., 2007, p. 379). The methodological tool that was used to help enter information, categorize, and code was NVivo. The type of data analysis utilized was the constant comparative method. The observations and themes in all 32 research studies went through this process. Mastropieri et al. (2007) summed up the entire process, "data were systematically collected and recorded, multiple informants and/ or data sources were obtained, disconfirming evidence was considered and the conclusion was reasonable and appropriate based on the data collected (p. 397).

Mastropieri et al (2007) acknowledged several limitations to the study. One of the limitations mentioned is the fact that the participants in the metasynthesis study could not have been considered a random sample. The research studies had already been conducted with their own participants. Another limitation acknowledged by the researchers was the fact that 31% of the research studies were considered excellent examples of successful co-teaching. None of the research studies that had been included were considered negative examples of co-teaching. As a result, the included studies represented a more

positive depiction of co-teaching. One last limitation that was acknowledged by the researchers is that there were several co-teachers who had declined to participate because they had problems in their co-teaching relationship. This obviously will impact the results of the studies if these studies included in the metasynthesis did not truly capture all perspectives of the experience. Mastropieri et al (2007) suggested two studies for future research. One suggestion was similar to the other studies and research literature which is to look for specific gains in student achievement as a result of genuine co-teacher partnerships. The other suggestion is that more effort be given to the area of qualitative research synthesis. For future research, it would be interesting to conduct a qualitative research synthesis to determine if co-teachers have identified the same needs and factors that are required for co-teaching to be successful.

Rosati, M.L. (2010). *Student, teacher, and administrative perceptions of a co-teaching inclusion model in one Virginia high school.* **(Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from Proquest. UMI No. 3394568.**

Summary

In this dissertation, Rosati (2010) shared the experiences in which her school attempts to be compliant with IDEA by implementing co-teaching for the first time. Atlantic High School started offering co-teaching classes for the first time during the 2008-2009 school year. As a result, they will have to determine how to best meet the needs of students in these co-taught classrooms, especially students with disabilities who are now in the general education setting. The researcher investigated "the perceptions of teachers, administrators, and students with disabilities to determine if they perceive that teachers are able to address the learning needs of students with disabilities within the

context of an inclusive classroom" (Rosati, 2010, p.4). The findings and results of this study will further help to improve the inclusion process for the school and district.

There were three research questions that guided the focus of this study: "1) What are students' with disabilities perceptions of how their learning needs are being met in inclusive co-taught classroom settings?

2) What are administrators' and teachers' perceptions of how teachers are able to provide instruction that meets the learning needs of students with disabilities within the context of the inclusive classroom?

3) How do teachers in inclusive classrooms differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students?" (Rosati, 2010, p.4).

From the data collected, Rosati (2010) found that:

1) Students with disabilities perceived that their learning needs were being met in the co-taught classroom setting. They felt that their needs were being met because there were two teachers in the classroom to provide individual help and a variety of instructional strategies were being implemented.

2) Both administrators and teachers perceived that co-teaching could meet the learning needs of students with disabilities within the context of the general education classrooms with needed adjustments. Administrators also perceived that teachers needed professional development and guidance in defining individual roles and responsibilities.

3) Teachers differentiated instruction and used various strategies such as "cloze notes, individual and small group instruction, cooperative learning, visual reinforcements, reading aloud, breaking the lesson down, modified assignments and rests, and proximity" (Rosati, 2010, p. 92).

Rosati (2010) also found five major themes that emerged from the data. The first theme was the "roles and responsibilities of teachers" (Rosati, 2010, p.61). Teachers struggled with defining their roles and responsibilities throughout the school year. This apparently led to conflicts between the co-teacher and his/her partner and resulted in further confusion. Some teachers just did what they felt was natural. However, what was natural to one teacher might not be natural to the other. Teachers also did not share responsibilities and even had different responsibilities outside and inside the classroom. Outside classroom responsibilities included lesson planning and grading. The general education teacher was primarily responsible for those duties along with delivering new instruction inside the classroom. However, the special education teacher was responsible for working with individual students or small groups and monitoring and redirecting student (Rosati, 2010). A pair of the co-teachers did not plan together because their schedules did not coincide. Also, special education teachers were sometimes absent from class because of other responsibilities. "The lack of role definition seemed to have had an affect on other areas of the study including instructional strategies, co-teacher relationships, and perceptions of co-teaching" (Rosati, 2010, p.66).

The second theme was the "instructional strategies used in co-taught inclusion classes" (Rosati, 2010, p.61). Special education teachers were seen as the strategists within the classroom and the general education teacher was seen as the content specialist. Together, the co-taught teachers differentiated instruction by using certain strategies such as: cloze notes (e.g., provided partial notes for students to fill in the blanks), visual reinforcements (e.g., used color coding, highlighted notes, use pictures in notes and slides), cooperative learning (e.g., worked in small groups and provided individualized

attention), read aloud (used as a testing accommodation and an instructional strategy, teachers and students read aloud in class), breaking down the lesson (e.g., chunking information, breaking down, and scaffolding), modified assignments and tests (e.g., extra time, fewer problems, and open book quizzes), and proximity (e.g., circulated to keep students on task and answer questions) (Rosati, 2010).

The third theme was "teacher capacity" (Rosati, 2010, p.61). The general education teachers lacked confidence in their own ability to teach students with disabilities. On the other hand, the special education teachers lacked confidence in their own ability to manage such a large amount of students in a general education classroom setting. This is one of the reasons why it is necessary for co-teachers to learn from each other and further complement each other with their strengths and weaknesses.

The fourth theme was "co-teacher relationships" (Rosati, 2010, p.61). This was considered by teachers and administrators to be one of the most critical components of a successful co-teaching team. The compatibility of the co-teachers will help determine the tension and support in the relationship.

The fifth and last theme that emerged from the data was "participant perspectives of inclusion and co-teaching" (Rosati, 2010, p.61). Every participant had their own perspectives about co-teaching that was constructed from their past experiences. These perspectives about co-teaching that participants had were diverse, similar to their individuality and past experiences. In spite of this, all participants perceived that students with disabilities needs were being met in the co-taught classroom. Students with disabilities even felt more comfortable staying in the co-taught classroom rather than going to a resource class.

In Rosati's (2010) conclusion, she reiterated that teachers felt that they were not prepared for co-teaching because of the demands placed on them in the matter of collaborative skills, special education strategies, and specific content knowledge. Co-teachers did not know what their roles as co-teachers should be. For inclusion to be successful, teachers must work together and help each other to develop strategies and content knowledge (Rosati, 2010). All four co-teacher participants believed in the positive effects of inclusion and co-teaching; however, they struggled with the process of collaboration and adapting to co-teaching practices. It is apparent that there is a need for professional development so that stronger co-teaching teams may emerge from this process (Rosati, 2010).

The research design for this dissertation was qualitative in nature. The setting is a rural high school in Virginia, called Atlantic High School. The participants that she had were two administrators, four co-teachers (special education algebra teacher, general education algebra teacher; special education English teacher, general education English teacher), and eight students with disabilities that were in the algebra and English co-taught classes. She used purposeful sampling of participants because they were able to provide her with information that she might not be able to obtain from others. Data came from observations, interviews, and field notes (Rosati, 2010). The researcher was the instrument in the study. She observed teachers and students in the classroom, in their natural environment and had repeated semi-structured interviews. She took field notes throughout the process. It was a total of eight classroom observations that lasted 90 minutes. After transcribing all her interviews from the audio recording, she was able to

check for emerging themes. She used the constant comparative method to identify the emerging patterns and themes.

Critical Analysis

The researcher did a great job in answering the three research questions that are summarized in the above paragraphs. She also shared the themes and implications that emerged from the data. For the most part, the questions and themes that were answered and identified were not a surprise at all. It is consistent with the results of previous studies and what is commonly found in literature. Co-teaching is very complex. It is not just the process that is complex but the fact that its success is dependent upon the relationships and knowledge of strategies and content subject. Relationships are very complex, let alone individual persons are complex. This study also reiterates the importance of providing professional development opportunities before and during the implementation of a co-teaching program. If they had provided the necessary training prior to the start of the school's implementation of co-teaching practices and training throughout the school year, teachers would have been better prepared. They would have been better prepared to collaborate with their partner, able to identify their roles and responsibilities, and, more than likely, had a better experience. This study is a good example of certain challenges that will be encountered by schools as they try to establish a co-teaching program for the first time.

One of the limitations to the study that the researcher shared was the fact that she had used a purposive sample out of convenience. Thus, it was not a randomly selected sample. The setting, a rural high school in Virginia, and the small sample size of 14 participants, and the findings of this study over a short period of time, might not make

it generalizable (Rosati, 2010). She could have done a better job at strengthening her study. Two of her three limitations that she listed could have been addressed easily. It is ultimately about the process and she did a great job of having experienced the process. Rosati (2010) made several recommendations for future research. One of the recommendations is to "examine the thoughts of students without disabilities that have been placed in co-taught inclusion classes" (Rosati, 2010, p.94). This would be interesting because researchers often focus the perceptions of students with disabilities when it involves co-teaching. The other two recommendations for future study are consistent with other studies and research literature suggesting that future studies examine student achievement and the role of instructional leaders in co-teaching (Rosati, 2010). For future studies, It would be interesting to conduct a longitudinal study in which the researcher follows the same teachers and the co-teaching program at Atlantic High School to track their progress and to determine what factors have helped to impede or enhance their success.

The research design was qualitative. It is a case study although it could almost be a phenomenology study because it does ask about people's experiences with a phenomenon, the first year implementation of co-teaching at a high school. It is probably similar to a phenomenology study because this case study happens to depict a phenomenon within its context. However, it is a case study because it could be transferred to a larger group of cases and it uses diverse data sources. The participants were properly and completely described with great detail and background information. However, the setting was not as detailed and thorough. The researcher did not include the high school population nor did she include how large the class sizes were in which she

pulled her participants from. It seemed that class size could be a factor of students receiving or not receiving more individualized support in the class; but, that information was not provided. The organization of the data was very thorough. She had provided three research questions to guide the study. The types of methodological tools employed were case study, observations, interviews, and field notes. These tools were adequately described so what the researcher measured was clear. The researcher was the instrument in the study. She tried hard not to be biased. But, it is nearly impossible for any person not to be biased as here this could almost be seen as a limitation. The observation data would have been more consistent if there were more than one observer. She had collected data from students, teachers, and administrators through observation, interviews, and field notes. Thus she collected data from multiple sources so as to reduce the risk that data was biased. She triangulated data sources. She could have strengthened her study by having more than one observer, interviewer, coder, or data analyst in her study. This would have been a perfect opportunity to use investigator triangulation.

Discussion

From the results of these four article reviews and one dissertation study review, it is evident that co-teaching is very complex. There is great variability in what inclusion delivery models are being implemented, what co-teaching looks like, how it is being implemented, what implications for practice are being suggested, and specifically what factors help to determine success of a co-teaching program. Hopefully, this literature review will help to provide a more consistent view of what research studies and research literature suggests as being common trends and practices in the co-teaching process.

The inclusion delivery models that are being implemented are the consultant teacher services and co-teaching model. In the past, and even still in some parts of the United States, the predominant practice has been the teacher consultant delivery model. Special education teachers, who act as consultants, are able to work directly with students individually or in small groups. They also provide indirect services to students through general education teacher as they help to modify instruction to accommodate individual student needs (Foote et al., 2010). However, the current and most common practice trend seems to be the co-teaching model. Many schools and districts have and are adopting it because it meets federal mandates, puts students in the least, restrictive environment, and is perceived to benefit everyone involved.

One of the studies reviewed, Rosati, (2010), followed the co-teaching process with students, co-teachers, and administrators as the high school implemented co-teaching for the first time. All participants that were involved stated that it was beneficial and met the needs of students with disabilities in the general education classroom setting. Other examples of benefits were mentioned, such as students receiving more individual attention because of the teacher to student ratio, instruction was differentiated, and various additional benefits. Benefits for co-teachers, students with disabilities, and even students without disabilities were also confirmed and expanded upon in the metasynthesis that Mastropieri et al. (2007) conducted. This was similar to the results reported by Bouck (2007) and Magiera and Simmons (2007). As a result of the findings in these studies, the perceived benefits of co-teaching, and schools compliance with federal mandates, co-teaching is becoming the more prevalent inclusion delivery model.

As mentioned in the introduction, Cook and Friend (1995) and Mastropieri et al. (2007), described what co-teaching looks like. The portrait that is painted is two professionals, typically a general education teacher and a special education teacher working together in a general education setting, teaching students with and without disabilities. Together, they will plan, instruct, assess, grade and manage the class. The teachers should complement each other with their particular skills. The special education teacher is the strategist and is equipped with the knowledge and skill sets to modify instruction to meet the needs of individual students and is accustomed to providing individual or small group instruction. The general education teacher is the content specialist who is knowledgeable about the specific content and is accustomed to whole group instruction. They are different but complementary (Rosati, 2010). When they are following the concepts and ideals of co-teaching, they should complement each other with their differences, strengths and weaknesses. An observer should be able to go into a co-taught classroom and not be able to identify who the special education teacher is or who the general education teacher is because they are both leading the instruction. This is the ideal picture of what genuine co-teaching should look like.

Unfortunately, the studies in this literature review did not depict the same image. According to some researchers, co-teachers were not planning together because they did not have a common planning period or they did not make efforts to meet at a scheduled time (Bouck, 2007). Some co-teachers did not share instructional roles. Often times, the special education teacher was in a subordinate role and his/her skills in modifying instruction were not utilized (Bouck, 2007; Foote et al., 2010; Mastropieri et al., 2007; Rosati, 2010). Instead, the special education teacher served in the role of teacher

assistant. At times it is the result of the general education teacher who is not yet ready to

relinquish the primary teaching role and remains territorial (Mastropieri et al., 2007).

Often, co-teachers did not assess, grade, or manage the classroom together because they

shared different grading or behavior management philosophies. As a result of not doing

all these things or merely a few of these together, the ideal co-teaching model or picture

is incomplete. As a matter of fact, some teachers do not complement each other

(Mastropieri et al., 2007). It is actually the opposite when they are not compatible

because of personality conflicts or differences in philosophies. Some special education

teachers were not present in their class certain days because they were doing other special

education duties (Rosati, 2010). There seems to be a disconnect between the ideals of co-

teaching and the application of the co-teaching model. As a result, co-teaching will look

differently because of the varied interpretations and implementations of the co-teaching

model.

According to Mastropieri et al. (2007), the co-teaching model is being implemented

differently across schools and classrooms. There is great variability in co-teaching

relationships, individual student needs, training, and the various factors that impact co-

teaching practices. Teachers may also have different interpretations of co-teaching. This

is one of the primary reasons why it is so difficult to determine what best practices should

be and what co-teaching should look like. For the most part, teachers are not

implementing co-teaching consistently across schools and classrooms. Magiera and

Simmons (2007) evaluated a co-teaching program in a school district to determine if co-

teaching was truly occurring. They indicated from their findings that there were varying

interpretations of what was constituted as co-teaching in the three different high schools.

Co-teachers were not implementing the ideals of co-teaching in a holistic fashion. As a result of the differences in interpretation and implementation, co-teaching practices did not look like true co-teaching. Magiera and Simmons (2007) wanted to be able to identify true co-teaching when they observed co-taught classes. They used the Magiera-Simmons Quality Indicator Model of Co-Teaching, a tool that had previously been designed by them. It would "systematically look for trends and patterns in co-teaching" (p. 5).

This tool provided a uniform standard of what quality co-teaching is and looked like. With this tool, the observer would be able to determine whether or not co-teaching was being implemented in the classroom. The researchers' findings were consistent with other studies and what research literature states about the inconsistent implementations of co-teaching practices. Each high school was ranked differently and was either considered emerging, progressing, or developed. This meant that quality co-teaching was rarely seen at one high school but in another high school, in the same district, "quality co-teaching was consistently observed and imbedded within the instruction" (Magiera & Simmons, 2007, p. 7). Within three high schools, in the same district, co-teaching was being implemented differently based on their inconsistent interpretations of co-teaching. This finding was consistent with Mastropieri et al.'s (2007) observation that, "examined critically, however, the practice of co-teaching as described in these investigations can hardly be said to resemble the truly collaborative models described by, for example, Cook and Friend (1995) or Walther-Thomas et al. (2000)." (p. 405).

Implications for Leaders

There were several implications for practice that were suggested by the researchers in the above studies. For the most part, the implications were consistent with

each other as well as consistent with what research literature suggests. Listed below are

the implications:

1) Ensure that there is administrative support (Mastropieri et al., 2007)

2) Solicit volunteers, allow co-teachers to pick their partners, and need for co-teachers to be compatible (Magiera & Simmons, 2007; Mastropieri et al., 2007)

3) Provide teacher training (Magiera & Simmons, 2007; Mastropieri et al., 2007; Rosati, 2010)

4) Keep co-teaching pairs together, especially if it is working (Magiera & Simmons, 2007)

5) Co-teacher pairs should visit other teachers (Magiera & Simmons, 2007)

6) Common planning or scheduled meeting times for co-teachers (Magiera & Simmons, 2007; Mastropieri et al., 2007)

7) Departmental membership for special education teachers to join their content department (Magiera & Simmons, 2007)

8) Co-teachers should plan, discuss, and define roles and responsibilities (Bouck 2007; Mastropieri et al., 2007)

9) Co-teachers need to be open to conversations (Bouck, 2007)

These implications are factors that have an effect on co-teaching to some degree. It is

consistent with the studies in the literature review and what research literature suggests.

Thus, it is possible to assume that certain factors exist and will be encountered through

the co-teaching process that will help to determine the extent of a co-teaching program's

success. It might be difficult to have a uniform standard of implementing co-teaching

practices because of the variability that surrounds the framework and ideals of co-teaching. However, it is possible to look at the studies and research literature and determine what factors, such as needs or implications, have been prevalent and consistent in findings pertaining to developing a successful co-teaching program regardless of variability. There is a need to identify these constant factors and the best approach or practices to creating a support system to ensure that teachers will have their needs met and the necessary factors in place to attain optimal performance. Thus, a uniform standard may be developed that will address these common factors and provide guidance and best practice strategies in handling them.

Listed below are several factors that have been consistently found in research literature and the studies included in the literature review that help to determine the success of a co-teaching program. These factors are taken from the implications for practice from the five research studies. It is critical that administrators and educational professionals are aware of these factors, know how to implement the necessary changes in their own programs, and support the co-teaching process. Please note that there might be other factors other than the ones listed below that will impact the success of a teaching program. These are factors that have been found in the studies that have been included in the literature review.

One major factor is administrative support. According to Mastropieri et al. (2007), administrative support is the most important factor in contributing to the success of a co-teaching program. It is a factor that impacts several of the other factors that are necessary to produce a successful co-teaching program. The implication here is that administrators need to support their co-teachers and the co-teaching process. This could translate to

providing, encouragement, providing professional development for co-teachers, evaluating co-teachers and providing feedback, supervising co-teachers and keeping accountability, structuring common planning times, and not forcing teachers into co-teaching or picking their partners for them. There are various things that administrators can do to support co-teachers and the co-teaching process.

The second major factor indicated by co-teachers to contribute to a successful co-teaching program is having a common planning time (Mastropieri et al., 2007). The implication here is for administrators to structure common planning time for co-teacher pairs. If the schedule does not work and this is impossible, other meeting times could be scheduled. Scheduled meetings could occur on teacher workdays or half days. Planning time could even be scheduled in the summer. Another viable option is to schedule the planning time before or after school, if contract and work hours do not conflict.

Another factor is clear teacher roles and expectations. This factor is necessary so that co-teachers are aware of the expectations of being a co-teacher and the responsibilities that are involved. Co-teachers must assume different roles in their co-teaching relationship; Bouck (2007) identified eight different roles that are commonly transplanted into practice. Co-teachers must understand the roles that they each play so that they can support the other person in that role. Most often teachers are not sharing the responsibilities in instruction, planning, grading, or classroom management. They are not meeting the demand. Sometimes one teacher plays a subordinate role. They must know that they share the same responsibilities and play several roles in the relationship. They are a team. The implication here is that administrators need to communicate to teachers the expectations and roles that co-teachers are to assume. One of the ways an

administrator can communicate this is through evaluative feedback. During this time administrators can provide the time and means for co-teachers to communicate with each other and reflect on their roles and practices. Another way administrators can communicate this is through providing a skeleton, or list, of expectations and responsibilities, to generate discussion so co-teachers can pick their roles and responsibilities.

Another factor that is important is professional development for co-teachers. Co-teachers should receive training before they begin the process of co-teaching. In this case, they will be better prepared for collaborative practices and have a greater understanding of the responsibilities and expectations of the role they are to assume. Co-teachers should also receive training throughout the school year. Training should be embedded in their daily practices. In this case, teachers are able to apply what they have learned and reflect on their practices. They should also have a coach or mentor to help them through their first year of co-teaching. The coach or mentor can come and observe the classes and give feedback as they are implementing the strategies that they are learning. Classes and seminars could be offered to co-teachers as professional development opportunities. Topics can range from instructional delivery, special education strategies, how to provide instruction to individuals, a group, or the whole class, behavioral management, creating effective lesson plans together, and the list can go on. Co-teacher pairs could also visit other co-teaching pairs and observe their classes. The implication here is for administrators to provide professional development opportunities and teacher training that will enhance teacher knowledge and performance.

The last factor that is listed here is probably the most challenging one, co-teacher compatibility. Every person is unique with a different background and personality. It is not surprising that tensions may rise throughout the co-teaching process. Philosophies and opinions may clash from time to time. It is important that co-teachers are compatible with each other on a personal and professional level. When teachers are compatible, they are supporting each other, learning from each other, modeling collaboration to their students, and it makes the experience better for everyone involved. Administrators should help increase teacher compatibility by giving teachers the option to co-teach and picking their own partners. Administrators should also provide a list of questions with specific topics such as instructional beliefs, planning, grading, confidentiality, routines, discipline, and various other topics (Cook & Friend, 1995). This will help to generate discussion so that co-teachers can come to agreements and understand each other's beliefs and values on certain issues that must address on a daily basis. Administrators should embed team building activities in the professional development opportunities and teacher training. Preferably, this would be done before or at the beginning of the year. The implication here is that administrators should encourage and help co-teachers to increase compatibility. Once co-teachers are compatible and are doing well, administrators should make sure that they remain working together (Rosati, 2010). Relationships are not easy to establish but it is pertinent and a contributor to the success of co-teaching.

In conclusion, the ideals and concepts of co-teaching are very alluring; however, generating true co-teaching practices is quite complex and difficult to cultivate. We are aware that there is great variability in what inclusion delivery models are being implemented, what co-teaching looks like, how it is being implemented, what

implications for practice are being suggested, and specifically what factors help to determine success of a co-teaching program. Hopefully, this literature review has helped to provide a more consistent view of what research studies and research literature suggests as being common trends and practices in the co-teaching process, especially the factors that contribute to the success of a co-teaching program. Implications for practices have been shared with the intent that administrators and educational leaders integrate it to practice with their own co-teaching programs.

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