

IOWA'S CO-TEACHING AND COLLABORATIVE CONSULTATION MODELS

Iowa Department of Education

Why Co-Teaching and Collaborative Consultation?

The two models were adopted in 2004 by the Iowa Department of Education in response to federal legislation.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) brought significant changes to Iowa requirements for “highly qualified” special education teachers. The requirements call for subject matter expertise in core academic subjects including English, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics, government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Prior to the legislation, many special education teachers in secondary settings had been teaching subject matter without holding subject matter endorsements. IDEA clarified that students with disabilities, like their nondisabled counterparts, have the right to subject matter expertise as well as special education services.

Combining specialist and subject matter expertise

Some states, as a result of the legislation, began efforts to assist special education teachers in acquiring subject matter expertise. The Iowa Department of Education, however, recognized that students would best benefit through models that combined the expertise of special education teachers and core content teachers. After extensive research and team visits to multiple schools in Iowa who were using collaborative teaching models, the Iowa DE adopted two models to implement the legislation and meet the needs of students: co-teaching and collaborative consultation.

In addition to providing students access to combined expertise of specialists (special education teachers) and core content experts (teachers endorsed in subject matter), the two collaborative models also provide an avenue for students with special needs to be integrated into general education settings, a key component to improving the success of students with disabilities. Compelling research points to improved achievement for these students when they are exposed to the general education curriculum in a setting which includes rich discussion among heterogeneous student groups.

The collaborative models also provide benefit to gifted students and typically-performing students. Two teachers in a classroom improve the teacher-to-student ratio; additionally, both co-teaching and consultation offer opportunities for diversifying classroom instruction and methodology.

What do Co-Teaching and Collaborative Consultation look like?

Co-teaching and collaborative consultation are Iowa's approaches to reaching students with diverse needs in integrated classrooms. The models began as ways to help students with special needs be more successful and have access to the same teachers and curriculum as their non-disabled peers. However, the models have been adopted for other diverse populations including at-risk students, gifted and talented students, and English language learners. *The best approach to implementing these models is to use both of them as a continuum of services depending on the needs of student populations, teacher schedules, teacher skills in co-teaching and instructional strategies, and other influencing factors.*

Co-Teaching

Co-Teaching is defined as two teachers physically present in heterogeneous classroom with joint and equal responsibility for classroom instruction. Iowa has adopted the Marilyn Friend co-teaching model and approaches as follows:

- **One teach, one observe:** One teacher provides instruction, while the other observes student learning to assess learning and gather data.
- **Station teaching:** Teachers are at stations and students move from station to station.
- **Parallel teaching:** Teachers simultaneously provide instruction through use of such structures as split class, cooperative learning, and lab settings. Teachers can provide the same or different content during parallel teaching.
- **Alternative teaching:** One teacher instructs a large group and the other teacher instructs small flexible student groups.
- **Teaming:** Teachers jointly present the same content at the same time through such structures as "tag team," "speak-and-chart" and other teaming structures.
- **One Teach, one assist:** One teacher provides instruction while the other teacher assists individual students or small groups. It never should be used as the primary approach.

Collaborative Consultation

Collaborative consultation is defined as a special education teacher serving in a consultative role to a core content endorsed teacher who carries the primary responsibility for instruction. The model allows a special education teacher to partner with multiple general education teachers without being physically present in the same classroom at the same time. The key characteristics of collaborative consultation are as follows.

- Core content endorsed teacher provides content instruction in general education class.
- Special education teacher is a consultant to the general education teacher in such areas as IEP accommodations, application of skills in the general education setting, goal progress and other related areas.
- Special education teacher provides strategy and skill instruction to students with IEPs outside of the general education class as needed.
- Special education teacher provides remediation, preteaching or reteaching outside of the general education classroom as needed.

Who does what in Co-Teaching and Collaborative Consultation?

Responsibility of Special Educator

- IEP development including goals, specially designed instruction, accommodations for instruction and assessment, modifications to instruction and assessment, progress monitoring and other related components
- Instruction in strategies and skills to assist the student in accessing content (for example, mnemonics and organizational skills)
- Skills deficit remediation
- Consultation and partnering to meet individual student and classroom needs

Responsibility of General Educator

- Progress in general education curriculum as outlined in Iowa Core Curriculum
- Classroom instructional strategies
- Classroom formative and summative assessment
- Grading
- Consultation and partnering to meet individual student and classroom needs

Teacher skill needs and resources for implementing the models

- Skills Needed
 - Co-Teaching Approaches
 - Differentiated Instruction
 - Universal Design for Learning
 - Special education strategies (special education teacher)
 - Collaborative and communication skills
 - Iowa Core Curriculum access skills (specialists) and content skills (content teachers)
- Resources (skill-based) available through area education agencies (AEAs)
 - Marilyn Friend Co-Teaching Model (for introductory co-teaching skills)
 - University of Kansas Strategic Instruction Model (KU SIM)
 - Differentiated Instruction
 - Universal Design for Learning
 - Multiple content skill-building opportunities including Every Child Reads, All Learners Inquire, Every Student Counts, Concept Oriented Reading Instruction, and many others.
- Resources available through the Iowa Department of Education (DE) can be found at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate/> including subcategories of Learning Supports, Diverse Learners, Special Education, and other related categories. Individuals may also look for topic areas such as “highly qualified teacher” through the alphabetical index on the DE home page.

How do Co-Teaching and Collaborative Consultation Connect To ...

Iowa Core Curriculum?

Iowa's collaborative teaching model is designed to provide access to Iowa's Core Curriculum (ICC) for a wide range of students through diversified classroom instruction and methodology. Partnership among Iowa's content and specialty teachers enables all students to have opportunities to meet the high expectations in the ICC. The specialists (such as teachers of gifted and talented, ELL, and special education students) provide access to the ICC in partnership with content specialists (endorsed in subject matter) who increase rigor and mastery. For more information, contact Rita Martens at Rita.Martens@iowa.gov, 515-281-3145, or see the link at www.corecurriculum.iowa.gov.

IDM?

Iowa's co-teaching and consultative teaching models combine the expertise of educational professionals to meet student needs that are identified through Iowa's Instructional Decision Making Model (IDM). IDM helps assess instructional needs of students in order to make informed instructional and curricular decisions. As performance is monitored, students move from one cycle of instruction to another through needs indicated by data. In this fluid and flexible process, each student receives instruction to address his or her unique learning needs. Utilizing their expertise in assessment and instruction, specialists and content experts target their skills on needs identified through IDM. For more information regarding IDM, contact Cynthia Knight at Cynthia.Knight@iowa.gov, 515-281-5287, Eric Neessen at Eric.Neessen@iowa.gov, 515-281-0345, or see the link at http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=801&Itemid=1305.

Special Education District Developed Delivery Plans?

Iowa's co-teaching and consultative models are outlined in the Continuum of Services section in the Special Education District Developed Delivery Plan Technical Assistance document, published by the Iowa Department of Education (February, 2009). A description of the models can be found in Example 2 on page 12 of the document, along with information on "pull-out services" and "special class" services. As the document notes, "Students may receive different services at multiple points along the continuum based on the IEP." For more information on District Developed Delivery Plans, contact Kiersten Hensley at Kiersten.Hensely@iowa.gov, 515-281-4123, or see the link at http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1719&Itemid=2515.

IEP Development and Documentation?

As individualized education programs (IEPs) for students are developed, the team considers how and where the student will receive his core content instruction in areas relevant to his goals. A description of these services is outlined in the IEP in Section F. Possible language for the IEP description is as follows: *For his math goal, the student is served in the general education classroom with consultation and support from the special education teacher. The general education math teacher is responsible for primary content instruction, testing, grading and behavioral management as specified in the IEP. The special education teacher supports the general education teacher with the design and preparation of materials, adaptations and accommodations. Additionally, the special education teacher provides the student support for the math goal in a pull-out setting.* For more information, contact Sharon Hawthorne at Sharon.Hawthorne@iowa.gov, 515-281-5461, or see the link at http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=581&Itemid=590.