Collaborative Co-Teaching Concepts

By Laura Feligno and Dina Stathopoulos
Co-Teaching... the key to a successful inclusion program.

What is co-teaching?

Co-teaching occurs when general and special education teachers work collaboratively to teach students who represent a range of abilities, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom.

Effective co-teachers work together as partners.
What is collaboration?

- **Collaboration** is the key to co-teaching. It is an interactive process that enables teachers with diverse expertise to provide quality services to students with a range of academic and social needs, including students with disabilities, in the general education classroom.

- Reciprocity of ideas and teaching
- Problem-solving
- Interactive communication
- Conflict resolution
- Shared responsibility
Establish a co-teaching relationship.

- Negotiation
- Setting Demands
- Understand students’ strengths and weaknesses
- Finding time to plan
Top 10 issues and possible solutions for co-teaching:

1. Find time to plan
2. Designate space
3. Assign grades together
4. Communicate with students and parents
5. Manage the classroom together
Top 10 issues and possible solutions for co-teaching: (cont.)

6. Attend professional development workshops on co-teaching.
7. Identify and limit the number of students
8. Manage the schedule
9. Provide support for team
10. Identify and address conflict
Co-teaching models

There are several approaches that can be taken toward facilitating a co-teaching model. Here are a few examples:

• **One Teaching/One Observing:** This is a traditional approach that depends upon good planning and preparation. The cooperating teacher may demonstrate an effective lesson and the student observes, analyzes, and prepares for a later discussion. Likewise, the student may teach and receive feedback in a clinical supervision model.

• **One Teaching/One Circulating:** Building on the traditional model, the teacher who is not presenting the lesson may assist students in need, monitor group or center activities, and check work.
Co-teaching models, cont.

- **Station/Center Teaching:** Two teachers can allow for additional centers or stations to be developed, monitored or managed. Students rotating from one center to another would have additional instruction and assistance available. On-task behavior and task completion can also be better managed.

- **Parallel Teaching/Split Class:** This class can be split into two groups with both of the teachers teaching the same content or skills. The advantage of having smaller number to work with will enhance on-task and social behavior and allow for more individualized instruction and assistance.
• **Large Group/Small Group Pull Out:** In this approach, the second teacher can work with an identified small group of students for remedial, enrichment, or other targeted instruction. Members of the class can address the content or skills they need without having the redundancy for students who already have reached mastery.

• **Team Teaching:** When two teachers have complimentary styles, they may together teach a class. This provides the lesson with each teacher’s strengths and knowledge. It also requires a compatibility that a novice and an experienced teacher may not have. It may provide a refreshing and interesting experience for students on occasion.