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The Effectiveness of Co-Teaching in the Elementary School

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The Effectiveness of Co-Teaching in the Elementary School

by

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1994, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) determined that students with disabilities should receive their education in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and should be integrated with their nondisabled peers in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible (Murawaski & Dieker, 2008). The guiding principle was that being in a general education setting helps students learn what their peers are learning in the classroom. To fulfill the placement goals of IDEA, co-teaching has been promulgated as a teaching model that can ensure students with disabilities have access to the same core curriculum as their peers. Co-teaching is an approach that allows students with disabilities to receive the necessary support to meet their individual needs in the general education setting.

Context and Statement of the Problem

Co-teaching is defined as “the partnering of a general education teacher and a special education teacher or another specialist for the purpose of jointly delivering instruction to a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities or other special needs, in a general education setting and in a way that flexibly and deliberately meets their learning needs” (Friend, 2008, p. 3). Co-teaching has been a part of my teaching career for the past 8 years, and I want to investigate the most effective co-teaching models used in elementary settings. In my teaching experiences, I have seen the academic performance of elementary students increase in a co-teaching model versus a pull-out model. My research is geared toward teachers and administration to gain support for co-teaching. I plan to describe different co-teaching models and examine the efficacy of each model when used in elementary classrooms.

Research Questions

Myriad models of co-teaching are extant, and each model has both strengths and weaknesses. This review examines the efficacy of manifold models of co-teaching. Six models of co-teaching are included in my review and analysis. The first effective model is “one teach, one assist.” In this model, one teacher is teaching, and the other teacher is interacting with students individually, answering questions, and focusing students’ attention as needed (Friend, 2016). The second model is station teaching (Friend, 2016). Station teaching is when each teacher is in charge of a station, and they teach different content from the lesson at each station. In this case, both teachers work with all of the students in the classroom when they rotate stations. Parallel teaching is the third model, and in this approach, teachers plan together and teach half of the class the same content (Friend, 2016). Alternative teaching, the fourth model, involves one of the teachers teaching a small group in a general education setting because they are struggling or need enrichment with the whole group instruction (Friend, 2016). Team teaching (Friend, 2016) is when each teacher may lead a discussion or may comment on the lesson while the other teacher is teaching. The last model is “one teach, one observe.” One teacher serves as the primary instructor, while the other is observing students’ learning and collecting data—which can be useful for what students needs additional help, what instruction takes place next, or tracking IEP plans (Friend, 2016).

Two research foci guided my review. First, six models of co-teaching were compared and contrasted. Second, the overall efficacy of the approaches was contrasted.

Rationale

A number of theoretical and practical consequences may arise from the results of this research. At the theoretical level, the findings from this analysis may further inform discussions of the social construction of knowledge. The tenets of co-teaching lie in the ideas of Piaget and Vygotsky, and an analysis of in situ studies of the implantation of co-teaching may ground some of the abstractions of these in classroom practice. The practical outcomes may include more informed and better classroom implementation of co-teaching.

Theoretical Issues

Constructivist theories of learning and of pedagogy inform co-teaching. Slavin (2000) reported that constructivist theories of learning are theories that learners must individually discover and transform information, checking new information against old rules and revising rules when they no longer work. Vygotsky (Slavin, 2000) and Piaget (Slavin, 2000) suggested that the social nature of learning is needed in order for change in learning. In a co-teaching environment, the social interaction with peers supports these theories.

Co-teaching affects social outcomes in schools because students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers are in the classroom together. Most of the models also allow some interaction amongst peers and teachers. Students hear different conversations, learn different ways of representing, and think about topics that will help all students develop their own patterns of learning. Co-teaching opportunities allow these conversations and listening sessions to occur either in a small group or as a whole group. Co-teaching supports the constructivist theories due to the social nature of learning.

The constructivist theories support co-teaching because, in order for the social nature of learning to happen, students need to be grouped with students with different academic strengths. Constructivists also support an approach called cognitive apprenticeship (Slavin, 2000). This is when a learner is paired with an expert and learns at their own pace with the expert. Students in a co-teaching model have two staff members and a variety of ability levels to support the cognitive apprenticeship. Constructivist theorists have aspects that support co-teaching.

Constructivist theories and co-teaching have similarities. The social nature of learning for students is an important factor. Students that have access to support supported and learn at a higher cognitive level in a co-teaching classroom will make gains at their own rate. Constructivist's support the cognitive development of students through experiences and interactions.

The results from this review may inform constructivist models of learning by tying applied results to theoretical tenets. The results may also lead to further description of constructivist tenets in the context of co-teaching.

Practical Consequences

A number of practical implications may arise from this review. Teachers using the co-teaching models need to understand the efficacy of the individual models. Teachers also need to understand how to work together as co-teachers to meet the needs of students. Co-teaching may impact many students' education and social interactions in the general education setting by providing opportunities to engage with others in their learning. Many teachers will learn how to collaborate to meet the needs of students in their classrooms. Administration will need to support

co-teaching in order for it to be successful for students and teachers by providing training, allowing time to collaborate, and providing a schedule that allows co-teaching to happen.

In order to make co-teaching impactful, teachers need time to collaborate with one another and have the appropriate training. Mastropieri et al., (2005) reported the need for training in collaboration, co-teaching, and differentiation strategies. When this training is lacking, co-teaching is not as effective. Teachers need to be valued for their individuality that they bring to a classroom. Discussing which strength each teacher can bring to the table could ease any judgement toward one another. This review may identify deficits in understanding and training related to co-teaching and develop for goals for training programs.

The review may inform administration and staff about composition of co-teaching classrooms. For example, Murawaski and Dieker (2008) argued that co-taught classrooms need to include a diverse representation of disabling conditions. If more than 30% of students have a disability in a classroom, teachers should refrain from having the same disability represented in the classroom, otherwise benefits of co-teaching may not be identified.

Co-teaching affects students by creating more positive learning environments. Students should feel comfortable approaching either teacher in the classroom. Being mindful of these practices will help maintain the success of the students in the general education setting.

Administration is a key to making co-teaching a success. Administrators can help provide materials and evaluate the schedule to meet the needs of co-teachers. They can also allow or deny two staff members in the same classroom co-teaching, which some do not like because of the number of students each teacher needs to service to make it equal across all classrooms. Co-teachers need administrator support in order to have co-teaching work effectively.

Teachers, students, and administrators have an important role together to make co-teaching a success for everyone. Administrators hold the key to the possible successes of the teacher and student in a co-teaching delivery model. When teachers feel empowered to collaborate and get the training, they need students to be the beneficiary of success.

Glossary

Co-teaching is the partnering of a general education teacher and a special education teacher or another specialist for the purpose of jointly delivering instruction to a diverse group of students, including those with disabilities or other special needs, in a general education setting and in a way that flexibly and deliberately meets their learning needs (Friend, 2008).

Strategies are methods or ways of teaching the students to meet their needs in the most inclusive environment.

Elementary classrooms consist of grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Co-teaching strategies and approaches are increasingly being used in classrooms in the United States in general, and in Minnesota in particular. Two factors contribute to the increased use. First, co-teaching facilitates the social construction of knowledge and of individual understandings by students. Teachers are more readily available to expedite individual learning at students engage in independent practice activities and in constructivist tasks. Second, co-teaching is perceived as a means for increasing the inclusion of students who have disabilities in less restrictive settings. This review examines the components and efficacy of myriad models of co-teaching. I describe the effects of specific co-teaching models on academic and behavior in elementary classrooms.

Scope of the Review

A number of approaches were used to identify studies related to co-teaching efficacy in K-5 classrooms. I computationally searched the ERIC and the SCSU library database. I used co-teaching models as the descriptor, and I received 334 results with the dates ranging from 2001 to the current year on the ERIC database. An additional 2,500 results were located on the St. Cloud State University (SCSU) database; these materials were published between 1966 to current. To delimit my search, I switched the date on the SCSU library database to 2001 and still found 2,296 resources. The results of the search did not fully inform the research questions, and I switched my search again to data for co-teaching models and had over 45,000 results in the ERIC database and 1,724 on the SCSU database. I found the ERIC database difficult to find articles because the institution does not provide full, free access to all of the articles. I also tried the Academic Search Premier using the date ranges of 2001 to 2020 and entered a combination of co-teaching and

models and found 97 articles with some great articles on the actual models. I continued to want to see more studies on the effectiveness of co-teaching, so I used the search criteria of co-teaching and effects or impact or consequences and found 62 articles, some of which were very informative.

Co-teaching began in the 1970s with the development of IDEA. Studies started developing in the late 1990s and continue in present day. The results from the computation and manual searches for appropriate studies revealed a number of patterns within the authorship of the articles.

**Presentation of the Findings:
Trends in Authorship**

A number of researchers contributed significantly to the literature on co-teaching. Marilyn Friend and Lynne Cook wrote many of the seminal studies in co-teaching. Their articles began appearing in the early 1990s, and these works continued to be cited in the research literature.

Margo Mastropieri, Thomas E. Scruggs and Dr. Wendy Murawaski also contributed significantly to the research on co-teaching. Scruggs and Mastropieri published four articles related to co-teaching. Murawaski focused on the implementation and application of co-teaching in classrooms. She published ten articles on the key components of co-teaching and the impact of those components when teachers use data-based decisions.

Co-teaching continues to be actively investigated. In the last decade, the authors that began the research on co-teaching are currently the ones producing articles on this topic.

Presentations of the Studies: The Effects of Co-teaching on Academics and Behavior

In this section, I describe the efficacy of each different co-teaching models for improving academic performance and for reducing maladaptive behaviors in elementary classrooms. The research reports are arranged thematically.

Keeley et al., (2017) studied the opinions of teachers and of students about co-teaching. The study followed a 6-week period where co-teaching had been implemented. Students and teachers were surveyed about their positive or negative experiences with co-teaching models.

A cohort of 122 students were surveyed. Thirty-three percent of students received special education services, and sixty-seven percent general education students. All the students were instructed in co-taught classrooms. The corpus of students was socially and culturally diverse. Approximately 36% of the participants were students of color. The results indicated that students noted a change in the classroom settings when the Station Teaching model was used in the classroom rather than other co-teaching models. Keeley et al., (2017) argued that less emphasis should be made on changing the structure of a classroom when implementing co-teaching models. Based on student surveys, students felt more confident with the subject areas in Parallel Teaching when compared to On Teach/One Assist and Station Teaching. Students indicated that they felt like they learned the best in Station Teaching, Alternative Teaching, Parallel, and Team Teaching.

The surveys of teachers revealed a number of patterns. One Teach/One Assist ranked as the least preferred and least effective model. Teachers also indicated that they preferred Alternative Teaching, Parallel Teaching or Team Teaching to manage student behavior and

develop student confidence. Teachers felt that they were able to meet the individual needs of students in these three models more effectively.

Pickard (2009) examined the Welsh Inclusion Model and how it effects on elementary students. The participants were fourth and fifth grade students who attended a Title I school. Students receiving special education services were included in the sample. The attitudes and beliefs of adult staff members were also assessed via a series of repeated surveys, interviews, and informal instruments.

According to the report, the non-disabled students developed a more positive attitude toward working with students identified as special needs learners. They exhibited empathy for the struggling learners and were willing to help them with their academic struggles (Pickard, 2009). As measured by annual achievement tests, the academic performance of the students improved.

The teachers reported that having both general and special education teachers teaching in the room helped structure the classroom and helped with teaming. Teachers found it helpful to share in the lesson planning and to jointly determine the teaching philosophies instantiated in the classroom (Pickard, 2009).

Hang and Rabren (2009) examined co-teaching and inclusion among students in elementary schools, in middle school, and in high school in southeastern United States. Hang and Rabren (2009) reported significant improvements in student academic and behavioral performances as a result of co-teaching. Quantitative data were analyzed in this study. Observations, SAT data, and surveys were used to determine if the year of co-teaching was impactful for the students with disabilities that participated in the co-teaching classes.

Academically, students with disabilities showed significant increases in the reading and math achievement relative to the previous year where co-teaching was not used (Hang & Rabren, 2009). However, discipline referrals increased during the study. Hang noted that long-term effects of co-teaching could not be determined. A control group was not studied, and the research expanded into too many grade levels and subject areas.

The general education teacher, the special education teacher, and the students that participated had positive perceptions on co-teaching. The co-teachers indicated that in order to make co-teaching effective they need to have common planning time each week. Also, both teachers need to feel responsible for the behavior management in the classroom. The study provided evidence that students and teachers have positive perceptions of co-teaching. Future studies should be completed to determine other practices of co-teaching could be implemented and effectiveness of the different models being used in the classrooms.

Scruggs et al., (2007) examined insights about attitudes, perceptions, interactions, classroom structure, and behaviors in the co-teaching model. The study included a significant sample size in with a diverse population in the United States. Co-teachers supported co-teaching that included common planning time was implemented, training was provided, and teachers volunteered to co-teach. One Teach/One Assist was the most common model that was implemented. Non-disabled students had increased cooperation with other students. Disabled and non-disabled students felt connected to the teachers in the co-teaching model.

The role of the special education teacher was the observer while the general education continued the role of the main teacher. Special education teachers reported not feeling as

confident in the content as the general education teacher and some general educators did not want to give up the control in their classrooms.

It was determined that the co-teaching model was beneficial for most of the students but had a clear divide that some students were not successful in this model. Co-teachers had to have a “marriage” relationship and had to work hard at co-teaching to make it work for all students that would be in a co-taught class.

Walsh (2012) completed a study in a Maryland where co-teaching was implemented over a 6-year period of time. In this study co-teaching was used as an intervention to close the achievement gap in math and reading and work on the continuous improvement based on the Maryland School Assessment. Co-teachers were given a yearlong professional development on the strategies in the co-teaching models. Students enjoyed school, learned more, had increased academics in math and reading, and felt better about themselves compared to peers in a self-contained classroom.

Special education teachers were placed together based on teaching philosophies. Co-teaching has made great impact in Maryland as a school system, and it continues to be used as a system strategy for continuous improvement. Maryland has made a commitment to focus on professional development in co-teaching using differentiated instruction to continue the success of co-teaching.

Spörer et al., (2021) addressed the impact of social participation which includes: 1) the presence of friendships between a students and classmates, 2) positive interactions between students, 3) acceptance of students by classmates, and 4) students’ perspective of being accepted

by classmates. This study was based on co-teaching in a primary setting in German schools with a small population of students identified with a disability.

During observations, “one teach, one assist” was the co-teaching model that was used with 53.5% of participants, “alternative teaching” was used with 26% of participants, and 14.1% of teachers used “parallel teaching.” Both teachers were determined to be in charge of the classroom in 6.2% of observed lessons. Data were collected through observations and it indicated that 14.3% of students would interact with another student or a teacher. When another teacher was present in the room this observed interaction increased to 18%. Interactions between any of the students in the classroom with the general education teacher was higher than interacting with the co-teacher in the room at a rate of 86.2% vs 13.8%. In this study, neither the impact of interaction between classmates or interactions between students and teachers influenced students’ self-perceived acceptance (Spörer et al., 2021).

In conclusion, the study indicated that the number of students with special education needs were far less than the number of general education students to determine if the study is accurate. Also, to inform teachers of the variety of different co-teaching models and the advantages and disadvantages to each of the inclusive models to foster a class that can create better social participation of all students in the classroom.

Summary

Based on the studies that were found on academic and behavior outcomes for co-teaching, it would be determined that co-teaching is a teaching model that works for some students and not for other students. “One teach, one assist” was the most common co-teaching model that was used in these studies. “The results underline the importance of providing teachers

with comprehension knowledge regarding co-teaching models and to support them in reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of different co-teaching models” (Spörer et al., 2021, p. 8).

**Presentation of the Studies:
Specialized Instruction**

Cook & Landrum-McDuffie (2020) stated the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Regulations mandate teachers provide students with disabilities specialized instruction that addresses “the unique needs of the child that result from the disability” and “ensure access of the child to the general education” (p. 221).

The first step Cook and Landrum-McDuffie (2020) suggested is to look at the needs and learning goals on the Individualized Education Plan and then select an effective practice to create the intervention together as co-teachers and determine if the intervention will meet the needs of all students. Depending on what the co-teachers decide, they will determine the appropriate co-teaching model to use in the classroom and then their particular roles during the teaching process. Lastly, the co-teachers will implement the model that was decided.

These are the five steps that is recommended to provide specialized instruction while benefiting from using co-teaching models. Using this process provides students with disabilities access to the general education curriculum while all students receive instruction that will meet their needs.

Tobin (2005) examined three students identified as LD in a language arts classroom in British Columbia in a sixth-grade class with five students on an IEP.

The co-teachers started out with “one teach, one assist” to deliver the language arts curriculum. The special education teacher then would take the curriculum and made modification

to it for the students that needed the modifications. Eventually, the special education teacher would bring the students that needed extra support into a small group to pre-teach and give the students prompts about the content so they could participate in whole class discussions. Mini-lessons were given to students along with creative response opportunities to get the students to the writing stage of response. At times, the students identified as LD went without the assistance they needed because they did not want to be perceived as different by their peers and so they did not ask questions.

Teachers in this co-teaching class felt that they needed more time planning and support from administration to make this co-teaching relationship work. Also, adapting curriculum set up students to fail to ask questions because their work was different than most of their peers in their classroom. The co-teachers agreed that they would adapt curricula for all students in the classroom and scaffold instruction.

Tobin (2005) stated that this was a short period of time and more investigation with more co-teachers is needed to further understand how co-teaching may support the students with learning disabilities in language arts. In this study teachers needed more professional development but admitted that the classroom routines and structures they put in place helped them reach a wide range of learning abilities.

Ghanaat Pisheh et al., (2017) examined the effect of cooperative teaching with three dyslexic students in a second-grade class in Tabriz, Iran. Participants were given an IQ test, a reading and dyslexia test, a 100-word reading test created by the researcher that included one to four syllable words that were placed randomly in the 100 words, and a training session.

In the training sessions teachers were provided a guidance of what the intervention would look like for the students. In the first block of training teachers were taught about both teachers managing the classroom, how to build motivation in students while explaining the existence of two teachers in the classroom and identifying the teachers as a support system while students work in cooperative groups. In the second training block teachers were taught how to give the students engaging learning experiences while they are working with students on an individual basis. Teachers worked on how to combine audio and visual instructions together. Each student was rotated to different groups. In the third and final block of training time management was taught to the students along with self-evaluation and seeking help from the teachers. The last part was the records that were being recorded and weak performance in the areas identified were worked on.

The was indicated on the 100-word test that was given before the intervention, during the intervention and as a concluding measure. Subject 1 had a starting point at 42 words and ended at 65.4. Subject 2 had a starting 35 and ended at 58.3 words. Finally, Subject 3 started at 50 words and ended at 62.6 words. Based on these increases it was determined that the intervention of cooperative teaching was successful for all three of the subjects identified as dyslexic.

Teachers in the study determined that in order for cooperative teaching to be successful teachers need to be committed to making it work through sufficient training. Being able to document and being able to present the reading material in with different representations is also important in the cooperative approach of co-teaching. It was also important to note that each teacher had a specialty in the classroom and were good at different things to help the students

whether it be knowing the content, being able to modify the content, and being willing to change the delivery of instruction.

Mackey et al. (2018) examined co-teaching with two schools in Australia and 15 schools in New Zealand. It was noted that administration support, co-teaching in flexible learning spaces, and sufficient resources were very crucial for co-teaching to be successful. Training in data collection is needed to make changes to implement different co-teaching models for student success.

During the co-teaching experience teachers were surveyed to see if their co-teaching experience was successful. Ten out of the 28 teachers defined a measurable outcome for students and the rest of the teachers identified success as having good communication. This survey indicated that more training needed to be done to improve student outcomes in the co-teaching environment. New Zealand had many teachers that were newly adopted to the co-teaching model, so improvement in student outcomes was noted high on the list of improvements.

Sileo and Garderen (2010) examined the efficiency of co-teaching models in two fifth-grade classrooms and focusing on math achievement. One classroom was teaching solo and the other classroom was using the co-teaching model. The two teachers in this study used the six co-teaching models interchangeably depending on the skill and the needs of the students in their classroom.

The goal the teachers had was to use research-based instruction practices in their classroom. To start the year, they used “one teach, one observe” to note and observe the students that were not participating in class and needed extra encouragement. This model was continued throughout the year to collect data on IEP goals. The two teachers, Ms. Merced and Ms. Thomas,

decided that several students were struggling on a numbers and operations unit with word problems and used the “team teaching” model to deliver instruction. The research-based instruction that they used was the Schema-Based Strategy that helped conceptual understanding and a process for solving word problems. The next model that was used in their classroom was the “alternative teaching” model. During this model the special education teacher worked with students that were having difficulties with problem solving twice a week for 15-20 minutes while the classroom teacher was working on problem-solving activities with the other students in the classroom. As mathematical content continued both teachers knew that there were a variety of ways to represent concepts through concrete-representational-abstract instructional processes. To have students get to the abstract level, the teachers used “parallel teaching” to instruct the students at what level they were learning at. The two teachers also used “station teaching” to emphasize and practice basic facts with the students. “One teach, one drift” was also used but the teachers felt that this was similar to “one teach, one observe” and used this model to collect data and record responses of the student understanding.

“Planning is integral to successful co-teaching and implementation of the instructional practices” (Sileo & Garderen, 2010, p. 18). The two teachers used all six models of co-teaching interchangeably with research-based practices in their co-taught math classroom to meet the needs of all the students. A challenge was scheduling and implementing all of the models. Teachers got used to co-teaching with one another as the year went on and made it successful for the students.

Summary

Co-teaching models have been used throughout the world like New Zealand, Australia, and Iran. “Planning is integral to successful co-teaching and implementation of the instructional practices” (Sileo & Garderen, 2010, p. 18). Administration must be supporting the co-teaching model along the way in order to provide optimal planning opportunities for the teachers to meet student needs. “The findings endorsed the need for professional learning and development to equip teachers to work together effectively with a strong focus on improving student outcomes” (Mackey et al., 2018, p. 465). Co-teaching can be used successfully in both math and reading classes based on the above studies. “General and special educators can work together to blend their knowledge bases. This relationship is invaluable because it weds content and strategy specialists and allows teachers an opportunity to meet all students’ mathematical learning needs” (Sileo & Garderen, 2010. p. 14). When planning and professional development are provided for co-teachers, it can meet the needs of students in their classroom.

Chapter 3: Summary and Recommendations

The purpose of these studies was to see which co-teaching models were used effectively and what was needed to implement a co-teaching model successfully. Chapter 1 consisted of background knowledge on co-teaching while Chapter 2 summarized nine studies of co-teaching being used in classroom settings. In this chapter, I cumulate the findings and provide recommendations for the use of co-teaching models and the possible impact on teachers and students.

Recommendations

In some of the studies reviewed there were limitations. The first limitation I noted was the longevity of the studies. There was only one study that had implemented co-teaching for more than 1 year, which was completed by Walsh (2012) in Maryland. The rest of the studies were during a 1-year trial of co-teaching.

The sizes of the samples were all significantly different. The lowest study was only three participants. (Ghannet Pisheh et al., 2017). The largest sample size included 454 co-teachers, 42 administrators, 142 students, 26 parents and 5 support personnel (Scruggs et al., 2007). The other samples sizes were between 25 participants and 125 participants. (Hang & Rabren, 2009; Mackey et al., 2018; Murawaski & Swanson, 2001; Scruggs et al., 2007; Solis et al., 2012; Tobin, 2005). The sample size would be important especially over a period of time to see all of the data from the participants.

Summary

Co-teaching models have been used throughout the world like New Zealand, Australia, and Iran. “Planning is integral to successful co-teaching and implementation of the instructional practices” (Sileo & Garderen, 2010, p. 18). Administration must be supporting the co-teaching model along the way in order to provide optimal planning opportunities for the teachers to meet student needs. “The findings endorsed the need for professional learning and development to equip teachers to work together effectively with a strong focus on improving student outcomes” (Mackey et al., 2018, p. 465). Co-teaching can be used successfully in both math and reading classes based on the above studies. “General and special educators can work together to blend their knowledge bases. This relationship is invaluable because it weds content and strategy specialists and allows teachers an opportunity to meet all students’ mathematical learning needs” (Sileo & Garderen, 2010, p. 14). When planning and professional development are provided for co-teachers, it can meet the needs of students in their classroom. Based on the studies that were found on academic and behavior outcomes for co-teaching, it would be determined that co-teaching is a teaching model that works for some students and not for other students. “One teach, one assist” was the most common co-teaching model that was used in these studies but not a recommended one according to literature. “The results underline the importance of providing teachers with comprehension knowledge regarding co-teaching models and to support them in reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of different co-teaching models.” (Spörer et al., 2021, p. 8).

What to do with the Information

As a special education teacher and general education teacher I am an advocate for co-teaching. I used the co-teaching model for 6 years in grades 3-5. At times, it was difficult to make sure the curriculum was modified to meet the needs of each student. I did find that the student's self-confidence increased when they were in the general education setting. I have experience with "parallel teaching," "one teach, one assist," and "station teaching." I found success in each of these models in my own experiences. I was very lucky to have administration support that worked around schedules so our team could co-teach. I found it beneficial seeing the scaffolding happening especially in math and I would use that knowledge to scaffold the learning of the fourth and fifth grade students I worked with. Due to the lack of federal funding, co-teaching was no longer an option in our building.

As I continue to work with students identified with a disability, I want to advocate to keep students in the least restrictive environment. I will advocate for co-teaching if that meets the needs of the students in my classroom.

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