

TOGETHER IS BETTER

Designing Learning for ALL

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“To go fast, go alone. To go far, go together” - Simon Sinek

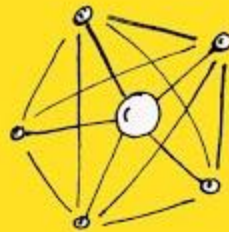


Structuring Teacher Collaboration



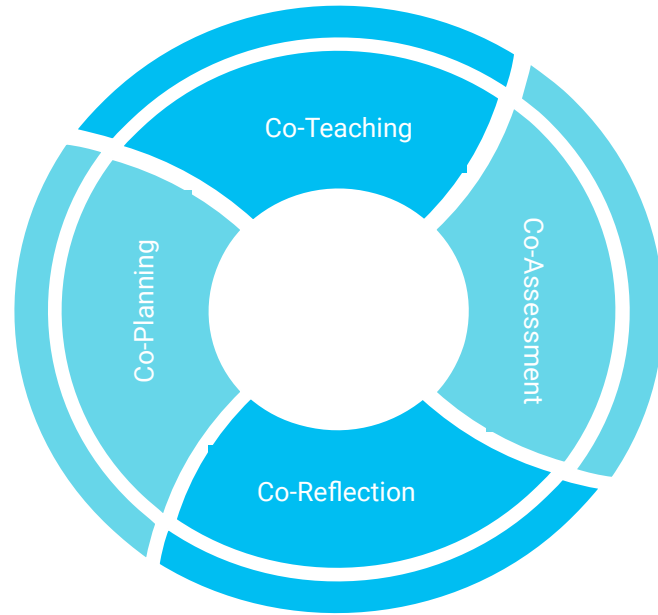
TOGETHER IS BETTER
Designing learning for ALL

**NJTESOL/NJBE
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Conference 2021**



COOPERATION VERSUS COLLABORATION

STRUCTURES FOR COLLABORATION



WHAT ARE PLCs?

A professional learning community (PLC) is a group of educators that meets regularly, shares expertise, and works collaboratively to improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES FOR PLCS

- A lack of clear, explicit goals for group work can lead to unfocused conversations, misspent time, and general confusion about the purpose of the groups.
- A dysfunctional school or staff culture could contribute to tensions, conflicts, and other issues that undermine the potential benefits of professional learning communities.
- A lack of observable, measurable progress or student-achievement gains
Can erode support, motivation, and enthusiasm for the process.
- Highly divergent educational philosophies and teaching styles can lead to can can undermine collegiality and a sense of a shared purpose.
- Inadequate training for group facilitators could produce ineffective facilitation, disorganized meetings, and an erosion of confidence in the process.



10 TRAITS OF TEACHER LEADERS

Peer? Expert?

Teacher Leaders Struggle to Gain Trust While Establishing Their Expertise

Why does teacher leadership matter in schools?



FACILITATOR noun

: someone that makes an action or process easy or easier

- A facilitator often helps a group of people to understand their common objectives and assists them to plan how to achieve these objectives
- A facilitator's job is to get others to assume responsibility and take the lead
- The facilitator's core tasks:
 - ◆ Promoting participation
 - Learning is social: all voices should be heard
 - ◆ Ensuring equity
 - Valuing different perspectives: learning from each other
 - ◆ Building trust
 - Collectively created: worthwhile learning comes with some discomfort

Teacher Leadership Paradox: Peer? Expert?

How can the teacher leader (facilitator) be both a trusted colleague and a resource for instructional improvement?

To create the conditions for effective teacher leadership, we must address this paradox directly and redefine our peer relationships, how we are utilizing PLCs, and the norms of teacher learning.

GROUP NORMS

- Ground rules, or norms, are important for a group that intends to work together on difficult issues, or who will be working together over time. They may be added to, or condensed, as the group progresses.
- Starting with basic ground rules builds trust, clarifies group expectations of one another, and establishes points of reflection to see how the group is doing regarding process.
- Do you currently have norms established for your PLCs?
 - ◆ If yes, were they co-created? Are they regularly reviewed?
 - ◆ If no, what would be some of the benefits of co-creating group norms for your PLC?



Protocol for Developing Group Norms

WHAT ARE PROTOCOLS?

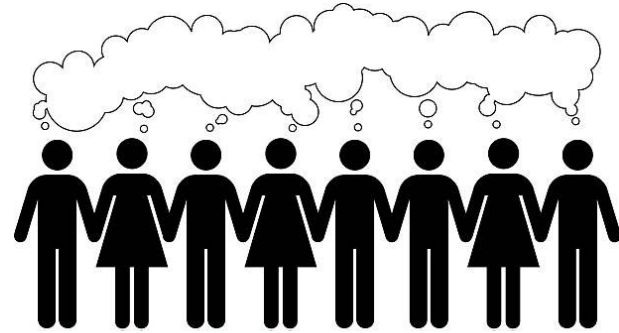
- Protocols are structured processes and guidelines to promote meaningful, efficient communication, problem solving, and learning.
- They give time for active listening and reflection, and ensure that all voices in the group are heard and honored.
- Using protocols appropriately in PLCs with colleagues, helps build the skills and the culture necessary for productive collaborative work.
- Although protocols are not needed for every PLC, once a group becomes accustomed to using protocols, they're more likely to collaborate more efficiently and effectively even when protocols are not being used.



Like guardrails along a highway, with support from a facilitator, protocols create a **safe space for honest and useful feedback** and ensure that the group involved **arrives at the proposed destination** rather than being pulled off-track.

WHAT CAN PROTOCOLS BE USED FOR?

- Share and learn from successes
- Introduce new ideas and topics
- Interpret data to improve student outcomes
- Address challenges with fresh perspectives
- Expand thinking and discover other perspectives
- Observe classrooms (in a non-evaluative way) to improve teaching, coaching, and learning
- Look at student work with specific objectives and needs in mind to improve outcomes
- Brainstorm and improve curriculum planning and instruction
- Keeping conversations focused on goals, solutions, and results



TYPES OF PROTOCOLS

**Protocols from National School Reform Faculty and School Reform Initiative.*



USING STUDENT WORK PROTOCOLS

- How can we examine patterns, themes, and inconsistencies to gain insight about students?
- How can we reflect on student work in ways that harness the power of multiple perspectives?

Some examples to explore:

[Student work protocol: Looking at Patterns in Student Work](#)

[Data protocol: ATLAS Looking at Data](#)

USING TEACHER WORK PROTOCOLS

- How can we examine current challenges and/or success in our work?
- How can we reflect on teacher work in ways that harness the power of multiple perspectives?

Some examples to explore:

[Ping Pong Protocol](#)

[What? So What? Now What?](#)

USING PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH & TEXT PROTOCOLS

- How do we best dig into texts to extract what we need?
- How can we read text collaboratively in ways that harness the power of multiple perspectives?

Some examples to explore:

[Text Rendering Experience](#)

[Three Levels of Text Protocol](#)



WHEN USING PROTOCOLS ...

Time is protected for active listening and silent reflection.

Equity and parity are emphasized and valued so all voices will be heard.

Participants feel safe to ask difficult questions and give and receive honest feedback.

Focus on specific pieces of work or dilemmas, in an honest attempt to address and resolve "the elephants in the room."

Participants gain differing perspectives and leave feeling empowered and optimistic, with actionable next steps.



IN SOME MEETINGS, WITHOUT PROTOCOLS ...

Some speak over one another, jump to speak, or speak without thinking, digressions.

A few voices do most of the talking, others silent or silenced, many distant or disengaged.

People feel attacked or abused by others, defensiveness and "us vs. them" abounds.

Bickering, endless complaining about the same problems over and over again, or stonewalling/defeated silence.

People leave the meeting without clear next steps or much hope for progress.

ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE PLCs

Facilitator Reflection

1. How do you think using protocols will benefit PLCs?
2. What do you foresee as challenges?
3. What additional supports would you need to implement effective PLCs?

COMPONENTS OF COLLABORATION



DEFINING COLLABORATION

Components:

- Co-Planning
- Co-Teaching
- Co-Assessing
- Co-Reflecting

Collaboration Impacts...

- student learning
 - ◆ content & language
- teacher learning
 - ◆ practices & beliefs

CO-PLANNING

- Establish a partnership and laying the foundation for collaboration
- Examining student data to make instructional decisions
- Planning instruction by integrating both professionals' expertise
- Expand impact on student learning through systemic efforts for collaboration



CO-PLANNING: APPLICATION

- What are expectations for this partnership? What are our expectations for our students?
- What are our non-negotiables and how can we negotiate them?
- What are some key ground rules we should establish for ourselves for collaborative planning, instruction, assessment, and reflection?
- How can we ensure parity so neither of us dominates instruction and ends up feeling like an assistant ?
- How might we best proceed to learn about each other's areas of expertise?
- How might we share classroom space? What materials and resources should be shared?
- What plans might we have for classroom management?
- Who will be responsible for assessment and grading?

CO-REFLECTION

- Engage in professional dialogue about instructional issues and learners' academic and linguistic development and performance.
- Decide what collaborative and instructional practices co-teachers wish to initiate, develop, continue, or discontinue.
- Engage in initiating, developing, continuing, or discontinuing certain instructional and collaborative practices.
- Collect, analyze, and reflect on both informal and formal data about both teaching practices and student learning.

CO-REFLECTING: APPLICATION

- What works and what needs adjustment in the way we configure our class for instruction?
- How can we enhance the classroom environment for fully integrating ELs yet actively differentiating for all students?
- What works and what needs adjustment regarding our time management?
- Which grouping strategies work best with particular students?
- How can we better establish an equitable co-teaching partnership?
- How can we better create a class environment that is equitable for all students?
- What works and what needs adjustment in our collaborative work prior, during, and after each lesson?

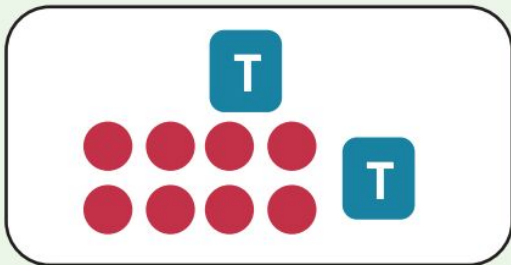
PAUSE AND PONDER



- What norms would support a teaching partnership?
- What might co-planning will look like for your team.
- Consider what each teacher might be responsible for during the co-planning phase.

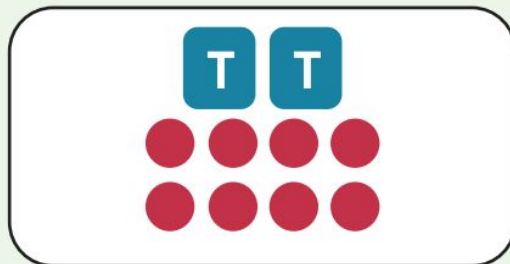
COLLABORATIVE TEACHING MODELS

In three models, the students remain as one large group, with specific roles for each teacher:



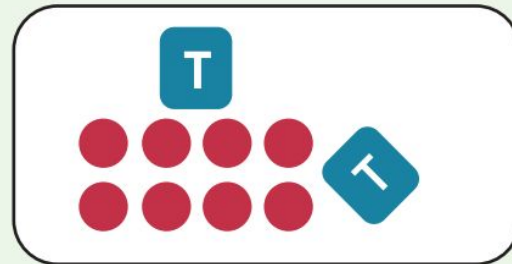
One Leads, One “Teaches on Purpose”

One teacher leads the lesson while the other supports one or more students with a clear goal based on identified student needs/strengths



Two Teach Same Content

Both teachers lead the lesson to provide all students with opportunities to learn rich new content and practice or enhance skills

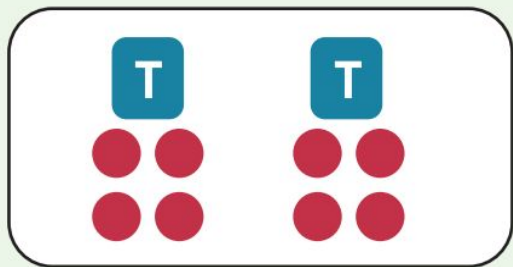


One Teaches, One Assesses

One teacher leads the lesson while the other collects targeted formative assessment data

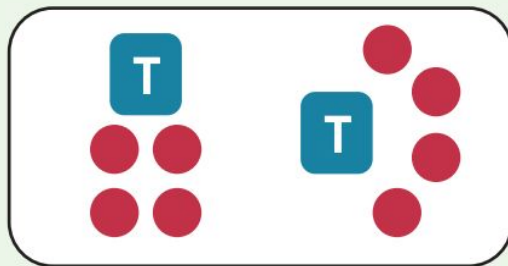
COLLABORATIVE TEACHING MODELS

In another three models, the students are divided into two groups:



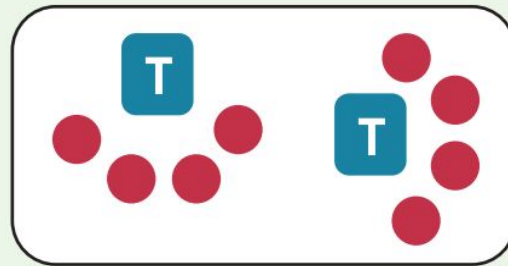
Two Teach Same Content

Each group is led by a teacher working on the same learning targets but with different modes, languages or approaches



One Pre-teaches, One Teaches Alternative Information

One group works on foundational skills or background building, whereas the other group works on enrichment or extension activities

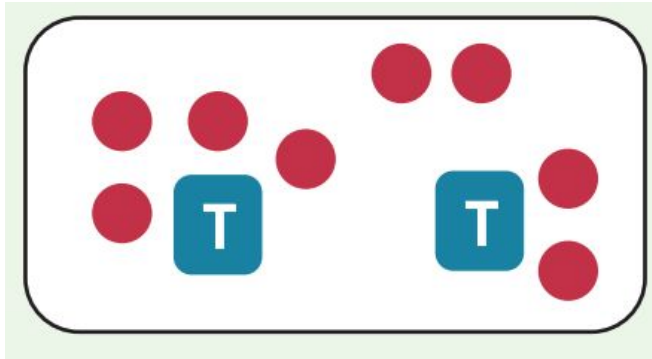


One Re-teaches, One Teaches Alternative Information

One group works on review and practice activities, whereas the other group works on enrichment or extension activities

COLLABORATIVE TEACHING MODELS

In the final model, students are divided into as many smaller groups as needed, depending upon the lesson's purpose, and learning is facilitated by both teachers.



Two Monitor and Teach

An array of flexible groupings allows teachers to differentiate the content, process, and products with targeted grouping and intentional cooperative scaffolding. This model is particularly well-suited when additional support personnel are also part of the lesson.

CO-ASSESSMENT

- Promote student learning in continuous, ongoing manner
- Elicit evidence of learning in a variety of ways through a variety of assessment tasks
- Set learning goals and use tools that indicate progressions to monitor learning
- Offer meaningful feedback to students and adjust instruction to improve learning
- Help students self-assess and become self-directed, autonomous learners

CO-REFLECTING: ASSESSMENT

- What are our shared goals for student learning?
 - ◆ Where are our students today, and where do we want them to go?
 - ◆ How are we planning for content and language development?
 - ◆ How do we measure student growth in both content and language development?
 - ◆ How do we ensure sharing responsibility for student outcomes in content & language development?
- How will all students, including ELs, on every level of proficiency demonstrate success?
 - ◆ How do we differentiate instruction and assessment for all levels of ELs?
 - ◆ How do we set attainable goals for all our students yet remain mindful of the grade-level benchmarks?
 - ◆ What assessment tools and measures are we going to use that are fair, meaningful, and equitable?
- What instruction will we provide collaboratively to ensure success for all our students?
 - ◆ How do we integrate content and language instruction?
 - ◆ How do we scaffold in support learning?

PAUSE AND PONDER

- How might you use formative assessment to inform future planning and teaching?
- What might co-assessment look like within a teaching partnership?



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