

63RD CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

Believing In Achieving

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When There is No Time to Plan: Then How Do You Collaborate?

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Objectives

- Understand forms of collaboration in the context of schools.
- Identify tools that assist general and special educators with planning for diverse groups of learners.
- Analyze methods in which collaborative tools can be implemented within school settings.
- Collaborate and practice ways in which teachers can effectively plan at their schools with other service providers in non-traditional ways.



What is collaboration?

- Collaboration is a working practice where individuals work together for a *common purpose* to achieve a *common goal*.
- “Reciprocal process through which participants create meaning continuously and simultaneously via multiple communication channels.” (Friend & Cook, 2010)



Collaboration is a time of

- Sharing expertise
- Networking
- Motivating fellow teachers
- Reflecting
- Participating
- Learning





Purpose of Collaboration in Education

To ensure that **all** of our students participate in the best learning experience possible.





Who do you collaborate with?

- Teachers
- Parents
- Volunteers
- Administrators
- Students
- Community



Where and when do you collaborate at school?

- Professional Learning Communities (PLC)
- Grade level meetings
- Lesson Planning
- Faculty meetings
- Departmental meetings (i.e. specialists, EC)
- Beginning/End-of-the year meetings



How to build a climate of collaboration

- Avoid an “us versus them” mentality
- Formalize roles
- Avoid organizational barriers
- Understand your own frame of reference (Cohen, Linder, & Stutts, 2006)
- Develop a partnership “language”
- Take a long-term view
- Allocate sufficient resources
- Require accountability



When collaborating, teachers should remember....

- there is no one right tool
- they are sharing in the decision making
- ideas must be voiced for any type of change to occur
- there is shared responsibility for educating the students
- to be open to trying new ideas and strategies



Who has time to collaborate?





Quick and easy ways to collaborate

- Blog/Facebook/Twitter
- Teacher Bulletin board/Wallwisher (padlet)
- Post it and go traditional or Pinterest
- Collaboration journal/manual or Livebinder
- Wiki
- Skype
- Email/Google docs
- Moodle





Creating an on-site/on-line Teacher Bulletin Board

- Design and utilize a specific bulletin board at your school just for teachers to share and gather creative ways to implement lessons.
- This is a good way to share accommodations and/or modifications that some of our students need to better access the curriculum, as well as share creative teacher-made materials.
- In addition to on-site bulletin boards, electronic bulletin boards are great too!



On-line bulletin boards



- Present a variety of questions and answers that can be viewed and discussed by a wide audience.
- Quick and easy to construct from multiple places.
- Examples include Pinterest, Wallwisher (Padlet), and Corkboard.me (Noteapp)



Post it and Go



- Can be centralized around grade levels or by topic.
- Provides a great way for EC teachers and service providers to be involved when strategizing with each grade level.
- Topics of discussion are listed and teachers are able to provide their insight and suggestions at leisure.
- Location of the board(s) should be in a central place that is accessible by all staff (i.e., lounge/library/teacher workroom)



Live binder

- Provides a great alternative to a spiral notebook or binder for organizing strategies, activities, and forms used within the classroom.
- Easily updates in real-time.
- Can be accessed by large or small groups of people.





Benefits of collaborating

- Enhances critical thinking
- Improves student achievement (Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007)
- Provides access to additional resources
- Promotes consistency of expectations
- Establishes partnerships with families and community
- Encourages an exchange of knowledge across disciplines
- Exemplifies program coherence
- **Meets the educational needs of all students**



“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much”

-Helen Keller



References

Cohen, R., Linder, J., & Stutts, L (2006). Working Together: Lessons learned form school, family, and community collaborations. *Psychology in the Schools*. 43(4)

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2010). Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Goddard, Y. L., Goddard, R. D., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2007). A theoretical and empirical investigation of teacher collaboration for school improvement and student achievement in public elementary schools. *Teachers College Record*, 109(4), 877-896.



Collaboration Resources

- <http://forums.theteacherscorner.net/forum.php>
- <http://digitalanthology.blogspot.com/>
- <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=185797>
- <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/teaching-ideas/search?page=1&query=disabilities>