



64<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

**WORKING TOGETHER  
TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS**

**Key Elements for  
Successful Collaboration in MTSS**

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PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA  
State Board of Education | Department of Public Instruction

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***The Problem ...***

- Decades of “collaboration” in the schools, and we’re still falling short of the potential benefits for students, educators, and families.

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***Current demands in MTSS ...***

Classroom teachers and specialists are called upon to increase collaboration more than ever as specialists now:

- Serve on data team
- Conduct staff training on instructional strategies
- Observe student/teacher interactions
- Consult on modifications and differentiation
- Model instruction
- Provide materials
- Assist with screenings and progress monitoring
- Conduct classroom-based lessons
- Conduct dynamic assessments
- Conduct short-term remediation with students not in Special Education
- Include families at all tiers of MTSS

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### Solution

- Digging deeper into Collaboration with a Capital “C”!
  - Approaches
  - Models
  - Supports that Work
  - Solutions

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### Plan for This Session

- Collaborative Approaches
  - Co-Teaching
  - Consultation
  - Teams
  - Benefits, Cautions and Tips
- Implementation Challenges and Solutions
  - Joint Planning/Scheduling
  - Roles
  - Conflict
- Building Successful Relationships
- Putting it in Place

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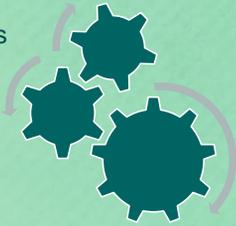
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### Format for This Session

- Information and Models
- Reflections
- Capture Sheet
- Action Plan
- Resources



See Handout

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### Reflection for Teachers



*Have you used some form of collaboration as part of services to students?*

*If so, was it a good experience or not-so-good experience?*

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### Reflection for Administrators



*When you assign or request collaboration, how specific are you about what staff should do?*

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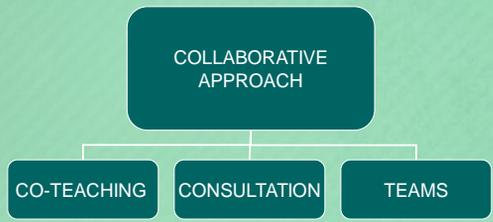
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# Co-Teaching



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## Models of Co-Teaching

- 1 Teach 1 Assist
- Alternative Teaching
- Parallel Teaching
- Station Teaching
- Team Teaching



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## 1 Teach 1 Assist

- One teacher is responsible for teaching, one teacher circulates throughout the classroom monitoring progress and providing assistance to students as needed.
- Both teachers share roles and responsibilities for working with students over time in such a way that the distinction between generalist and specialist is not obvious.

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# Benefits and Drawbacks

## 1 Teach, 1 Assist

- Requires little joint planning
- Specialist may become an assistant
- Can allow specialist to focus expertise on certain students as needed
- Can be distracting
- Students may become dependent learners

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# Alternative Teaching

- One teacher takes responsibility for the large group while the other works with a smaller group for a specific instructional purpose.

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# Benefits and Drawbacks

## Alternative Teaching

- Provides highly intensive instruction in the classroom
- May create stigma for students who need special help if repeatedly grouped
- Can provide preteaching or reteaching for students who need it
- Can be used for skills assessment

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# Parallel Teaching

- The teachers are both teaching the same information, but they divide the class group and do so simultaneously.
- This approach can be used frequently if noise level is not distracting and both teachers pace instruction accordingly.

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# Benefits and Drawbacks Parallel Teaching

- Lower student-teacher ratio
- Allows more student participation
- Allows differentiation of instruction
- Can present opposing perspectives on topics
- Must be careful that the same content is covered in both groups – may not work well for initial instruction

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# Station Teaching

- Teachers divide content and students. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other group.

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### Benefits and Drawbacks Station Teaching

- Allows separate planning and different teaching styles
- Lower student-teacher ratio
- Can be noisy
- Movement can be disruptive
- Must be careful about sequence of activities at stations

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### Team Teaching

- Both teachers share the planning and delivery and have equally active roles in leading the class.
- Both teachers are actively engaged in the delivery of core instruction.

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### Benefits and Drawbacks Team Teaching

- Can be very energizing and innovative for teachers
- Provides role models for students
- Clearly communicates equity of status
- Requires greatest level of mutual trust, commitment, and communication
- Requires compatibility and flexibility

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## Reflection for Teachers



*How many models of co-teaching are you using now?*

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## Reflection for Administrators



*How many models of co-teaching are occurring in your school?*

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## Consultation




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**Definition:**

School consultation is a process in which one professional assists another to address a problem concerning a third party.

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Teacher = *consultee*

Specialist = *consultant*

Students = *beneficiaries*



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**Comprehensive Consulting**

- Listen carefully to your consultee
- Consider this a partnership to support students
- Avoid being a "one-time expert"
  - Participate in planning, implementation, and monitoring/evaluating

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### Expanded Consulting

- Expand the original definition of “one professional assists another”
- Consult to a team or a small group

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### Reflection for Teachers



*Are you engaged in consulting at your school? Is it part of your assignment? Is it in your schedule?*

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### Reflection for Administrators



*How many of your staff engage in consultation? Is it an acknowledged part of their assignment, with time allocated for it?*

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# Teams



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## Definition of Educational Team: (from Friend and Cook)

A set of **interdependent individuals** with **unique skills and perspectives** who **interact directly** to achieve their **mutual goal** of providing **students** with effective educational programs and services.



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## Life Cycle of a Team



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## Tips for Effective Teams




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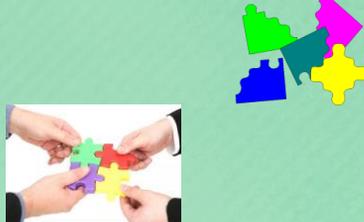
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## Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise




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## Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- **Willingness to participate**




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### Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- **Maturity, flexibility and commitment**




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### Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- Maturity, flexibility and commitment
- **Physical proximity of team members**




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### Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- Maturity, flexibility and commitment
- Physical proximity of team members
- **Administrative support**




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## Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- Maturity, flexibility and commitment
- Physical proximity of team members
- Administrative support
- **Clear common goal and shared vision**




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## Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- Maturity, flexibility and commitment
- Physical proximity of team members
- Administrative support
- Clear common goal and shared vision
- **Effective communication**




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## Tips for Effective Teams

- Team members with diverse areas of expertise
- Willingness to participate
- Maturity, flexibility and commitment
- Physical proximity of team members
- Administrative support
- Clear common goal and shared vision
- Effective communication
- **Internet and email**




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### Reflection



*Think of teams that you are currently on or have been on in the past. Include work settings as well as community, church/synagogue, volunteer work, etc.*

*Identify those that were effective, and those that were not productive.*

*Identify the factors that contributed to those teams' success or struggles.*

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## Implementing Collaboration in the Schools: Challenges and Solutions

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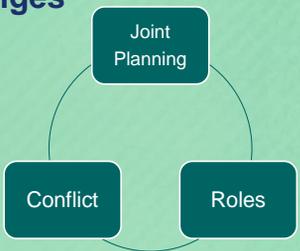
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### Challenges



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# Challenges Related to Joint Planning

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## JOINT PLANNING

- Essential for collaborating, but when do you fit it in???
- The problem is SCHEDULING

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## Reflection for Teachers

- *Do you have time in your schedule for joint planning? If so, how much and how often?*

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### Reflection for Administrators



- *Do your staff have time in their schedules for joint planning? If so, how much and how often?*

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### Scheduling Tips




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### Scheduling Tips

- Think “workload,” scheduling classrooms and activities rather than students




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### Scheduling Tips

- Think "workload," scheduling classrooms and activities rather than students
- Schedule teacher teams for shared lunch and planning




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### Scheduling Tips

- Think "workload," scheduling classrooms and activities rather than students
- Schedule teacher teams for shared lunch and planning
- Offer continuing education credit or a stipend for planning time outside of contract hours




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### Scheduling Tips

- Think "workload," scheduling classrooms and activities rather than students
- Schedule teacher teams for shared lunch and planning
- Offer continuing education credit or a stipend for planning time outside of contract hours
- Start late or end early one day a week to free all staff for joint planning




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### Scheduling Tips

- Think "workload," scheduling classrooms and activities rather than students
- Schedule teacher teams for shared lunch and planning
- Offer continuing education credit or a stipend for planning time outside of contract hours
- Start late or end early one day a week to free all staff for joint planning
- Use email and web sites to supplement face-to-face communication




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### Scheduling Workload

- **What percentage of your/your staff's work week do you/they spend in:**
  - Direct services to students in pull-out
  - Direct services to students in classrooms
  - Consulting
  - Meetings
  - Planning
  - Paperwork
  - Calls with parents and agencies
  - Other ...

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### Scheduling Workload

- **What percentage of your staff's work week do they spend in:**
  - Direct services to students in pull-out
  - Direct services to students in classrooms
  - Consulting
  - Meetings
  - Planning
  - Paperwork
  - Calls with parents and agencies
  - Other ...

**Are these activities included in your/their schedules?**

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### The Problem ...

- There's a big disconnect between what you **do** and what is in your **schedule**

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### Scheduling Workload

- Direct instruction/intervention to students
- Indirect services to support classroom learning
- Indirect services to support IEP goals
- Professional activities and responsibilities associated with working in a school setting

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### 3-Step Process

- 1. **Identify** all that they do or want to do
- 2. **Plan services** for students based on that range of activities
- 3. **Schedule** those services and activities

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### Reflection



- *Think of three ways that you could add joint planning time to your/your staff's schedule*

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## Challenges Related to Roles

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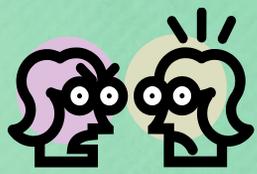
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### ROLES



- General educator concerns
  - Invasion of my turf
  - Accountability
  - Time limitations
  - Inadequate support
- Concerns of special educators
  - Caseloads
  - Paperwork
  - Role/status ambiguity

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### To Help Differentiate Roles:

	General Educator	Special Educator
Special Expertise		
General Knowledge		

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	General Educator	Special Educator
Special Expertise	Content Curriculum Pedagogy	
General Knowledge	Individual student needs Instructional modifications	

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	General Educator	Special Educator
Special Expertise		Individual student needs Instructional modifications
General Knowledge		Content Curriculum Pedagogy

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	General Educator	Special Educator
Special Expertise	Content Curriculum Pedagogy	Individual student needs Instructional modifications
General Knowledge	Individual student needs Instructional modifications	Content Curriculum Pedagogy

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## Reflection for Teachers



*Have you experienced role confusion while collaborating?*

*If so, could this acknowledgement of role differentiation have helped?*

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## Reflection for Administrators



*Are your staff's collaborative assignments and teams formed based on a balance of expertise and general knowledge??*

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# Challenges Related to Conflict

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## CONFLICT

Conflict is a struggle that occurs when individuals, interdependent with others, perceive that those others are interfering with their goal attainment.

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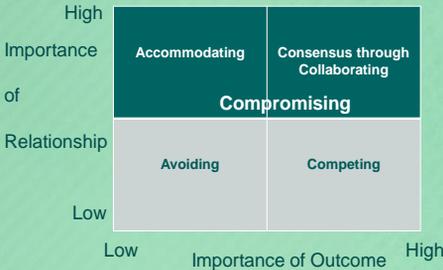
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## Conflict Response Styles



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## Conflict Can Be Productive

Through discussion of different perspectives and alternatives, conflict can be an opportunity for:

- Professional growth
- Better outcomes for students

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## Reflection



- *Think of advantages and disadvantages of each conflict response style*




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# Building Successful Collaborative Relationships

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## Conversations that Build Collaborative Relationships

Create the time and place for staff teams to establish a solid foundation for collaboration

- Topics to discuss:
  - Philosophy and beliefs
  - Parity signals
  - Classroom routines
  - Discipline
  - Feedback
  - Noise
  - Pet peeves

**See Handout**

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Topic	Questions
Philosophy and beliefs	What are our philosophies about the roles of teachers and teaching and about students and learning? How do our pedagogical beliefs affect our instructional practice? What do we believe about the potential for all students to find success in our classroom?
Parity signals	How will we convey to students and others (e.g., teachers, parents) that we are equals in the classroom? How can we ensure a sense of parity in the planning and delivery of instruction? What does each of us consider key signals of parity (e.g., two adult chairs, both names on syllabus)?
Classroom routines	What are the instructional routines for the classroom (e.g., how previous lessons are reviewed, what strategies are used to encourage student involvement)? What are the organizational routines for the classroom (e.g., are students allowed to go to their lockers during class; what should students do if they complete independent work before classmates)?
Discipline	What is acceptable and unacceptable student behavior? Who is to intervene at what point in students' behavior? What are the rewards and consequences used in the classroom?
Feedback	What is the best way to give each other feedback? When? How will we ensure that both positive and negative issues are raised?
Noise	What noise level are we comfortable with in the classroom?
Pet peeves	What aspects of teaching and classroom life does each of us feel strongly about? How can we identify our pet peeves so as to avoid them?

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## Pulling It All Together: Developing an Action Plan

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### Let's revisit staff roles in MTSS

- Serve on data team
- Conduct staff training on instructional strategies
- Observe student/teacher interactions
- Consult on modifications and differentiation
- Model instruction
- Provide materials
- Assist with screenings and progress monitoring
- Conduct classroom-based lessons
- Conduct dynamic assessments
- Conduct short-term remediation with students not in Special Education
- Include families at all tiers of MTSS

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### Action Plan: Teachers

- *Choose three ways you could begin to change your schedule to include work you'd like to do across all three tiers*



- *Begin to fill in a blank schedule with ways to modify your current schedule*

[See Handout](#)

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### What's Needed from Administrators to Make this Work?

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### Action Plan: Collaboration, MTSS and You

Consider ways to support your students, staff and families by fostering:

- Appropriate use of co-teaching models
- Consultation as part of staff assignments and IEP services
- Acknowledgement of both direct and indirect services
- Development of effective teams
- Flexibility in scheduling to allow for joint planning and indirect services

See Handout

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### Action Plan: Collaboration, MTSS and You (cont.)

Explore ways to bring about those changes via:

- Ongoing professional development
- Staff input on developing shared goals and setting priorities
- Plan for phasing in changes
- Staff input on what they need from administration to make this happen

See Handout

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### Resources

- *Interactions: Collaboration Skills for School Professionals* 6<sup>th</sup> Edition – Friend and Cook; Pearson
- [iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/iris-resource-locator](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/iris-resource-locator)
- [www.ASHA.org](http://www.ASHA.org) Search “workload”

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Q&A



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*Thank you!*

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# WORKING TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE STUDENT SUCCESS

64<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE ON EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

## *Session #80: Key Elements for Successful Collaboration in MTSS*

*K. Whitmire*

### CAPTURE SHEET

#### Take-Away Messages

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#### Action Steps

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## BUILDING A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Questions</b>
Philosophy and beliefs	What are our philosophies about the roles of teachers and teaching and about students and learning? How do our pedagogical beliefs affect our instructional practice? What do we believe about the potential for all students to find success in our classroom?
Parity signals	How will we convey to students and others (e.g., teachers, parents) that we are equals in the classroom? How can we ensure a sense of parity in the planning and delivery of instruction? What does each of us consider key signals of parity (e.g., two adult chairs, both names on syllabus)?
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Feedback	What is the best way to give each other feedback? When? How will we ensure that both positive and negative issues are raised?
Noise	What noise level are we comfortable with in the classroom?
Pet peeves	What aspects of teaching and classroom life does each of us feel strongly about? How can we identify our pet peeves so as to avoid them?

## ***ACTION PLAN: Teachers***

***Choose three ways you could begin to change your schedule to include collaboration you'd like to do across all three tiers. Begin to fill in this blank schedule with ways to modify your current schedule***

<b>Time</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
8:00 AM					
8:30 AM					
9:10 AM					
9:50 AM					
10:30 AM					
11:10 AM					
11:50 AM					
12:30 PM					
1:10 PM					
1:50 PM					
2:30 PM					
3:10 PM					
3:40 PM					

## ***ACTION PLAN: Administrators***

**Consider ways to support your students, staff and families by using the appropriate vehicle(s) to achieve these five goals:**

	<b>VEHICLE #1: Ongoing professional development</b>	<b>VEHICLE #2: Staff input on developing shared goals and setting priorities</b>	<b>VEHICLE #3: Plan for phasing in changes</b>	<b>VEHICLE #4: Staff input on what they need from administration to make this happen</b>
<b>GOAL #1: Appropriate use of co-teaching models</b>				
<b>GOAL #2: Consultation as part of staff assignments and IEP services</b>				
<b>GOAL #3: Acknowledgement of both direct and indirect services</b>				
<b>GOAL #4: Development of effective teams</b>				
<b>GOAL #5: Flexibility in scheduling to allow for joint planning and indirect services</b>				