

## Roles of Teachers in Inclusive Schools

### Introduction

This document is intended to outline the changing roles of classroom and instructional resource teachers as we move towards more formalized inclusive education practices in schools.

The following initiatives will further inform changes to the roles of instructional resource and classroom teachers:

- **Inclusive Schools Initiative** - Since 2008, 65 schools have entered the Inclusive Schools Initiative which is supporting educators' professional learning around inclusive practices, differentiated instruction, and co-teaching methods. By the end of the 2014 -15 school year, all provincial schools will have completed this professional learning.
- **K-3 Literacy Initiative Committee** – This committee will make recommendations to the Department of Education regarding the development of an inclusive and preventative approach to literacy teaching and learning in Kindergarten to Grade Three.
- **Pathways Review Committee** – A joint departmental and district group will review the Pathway service model through an inclusive lens.

### Provision of Services in Inclusive Schools

The belief of inclusive education is that the starting point for any student is the regular classroom and that classes be heterogeneous in nature. Instruction should be offered in the least restrictive, most inclusive environment respecting the dignity of the student. Instructional resource and classroom/subject teachers work in partnership to support students' diverse learning needs in inclusive schools. This partnership can take many different forms depending on students' unique learning needs, available resources, classroom profiles and curriculum expertise/familiarity. These partnerships include collaboration, co-teaching and pull-out.

## 1. Collaboration

**Collaboration** is the process of merging the knowledge, experience and skills of professionals to meet common goals. Although collaboration occurs among all educational partners, for the purpose of this document we will be referring to collaboration between instructional resource teachers and classroom/subject teachers. Collaboration may involve:

- < Problem solving around IEP issues, choice of instructional strategies, interpretation of

assessment data to inform instruction, etc.

- < Participation on student support services teams, program planning teams, etc.
- < Participation in professional learning communities.
- < Preparation and/or follow up re: parent/teacher conferences.
- < Sharing resources.
- < Common planning, e.g., grade level or department meetings.

## 2. Co-Teaching

**Co-teaching** is two or more professionals:

- < Working collaboratively in the same physical space.
- < Sharing responsibility for curriculum delivery (either prescribed, modified or alternate), assessment and evaluation. The degree to which this occurs is heavily dependent on the co-teaching model employed.
- < Devoting time for planning, reflection and /or problem solving.
- < Instructing a heterogeneous class.

Although co-teaching can also occur between two classroom/subject teachers or other education professionals, for the purpose of this document we will be referring to co-teaching involving instructional resource teachers and classroom/subject teachers.

Professionals would employ various co-teaching models depending on students' needs, available resources, classroom profiles and curriculum expertise/ familiarity. Movement between models is expected to be fluid; different models may be employed within one class period or throughout a given topic. For example, a class may start with 10 minutes of alternative teaching and then another model may be better suited to the remainder of the lesson. The topic addressed on the following day may suggest the use of yet another model.

Before beginning any co-teaching endeavour, the teaching pair must reach consensus regarding components of co-teaching such as:

- < interpersonal communication
- < physical arrangement of the classroom
- < familiarity with curriculum
- < curriculum goals and modifications
- < IEP outcomes and Pathway 2 accommodations
- < instructional planning
- < instructional presentation
- < classroom management
- < assessment and evaluation

***N.B. Instructional resource teachers will not be solely responsible for teaching provincially prescribed curriculum.***

Professionals may work together in the regular classroom using the six models of co-teaching as outlined in the following work:

Friend, M. & Cook, L. (2004). Co-Teaching: Principles, Practices, and Pragmatics. New Mexico Public Education Department Quarterly Special Education Meeting Albuquerque, NM, April 29, 2004.

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### **One Teach, One Observe**

#### **Description:**

In this model, one person observes while the other teaches. Professionals should decide in advance what types of information are to be gathered during the observation and should agree on a system for gathering the data. Afterward, the two professionals should jointly analyze the information. That is, observation should be a deliberate part of the lesson, not just incidental checks of student activity.

#### **Sample Applications:**

- < in new co-teaching situations
  - < to investigate particular questions about the student(s)' learning environment
  - < to monitor student progress
  - < to determine if cooperative groups are functioning effectively
  - < to note which students begin/do not begin work promptly
  - < to determine the impact of the physical classroom environment on student learning
  - < to observe which supports are effective in assisting a student
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### **One Teach, One Drift**

#### **Description:**

In this model, one person instructs while the other circulates throughout the room providing assistance to students as needed. If both are familiar with the curriculum content, either teacher may lead instruction.

#### **Sample Applications:**

- < when the lesson lends itself to delivery by one teacher
  - < when one teacher has particular expertise for the lesson
  - < in new co-teaching situations while building a teaching relationship
  - < in lessons where students' work needs close monitoring
  - < to determine students' comprehension of concepts
  - < to ascertain that students are following the guidelines for specific procedures
  - < to provide immediate clarification of concepts presented
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### **Parallel Teaching**

**Description:**

In this model, the class is divided into two heterogeneous groups of approximately the same size. Both teachers plan the lesson(s) jointly and teach the same topic simultaneously. This approach gives each teacher an active – but separate – instructional role in the classroom. Students can be strategically placed in the two groups.

**Sample Applications**

- < when a lower teacher-student ratio is needed to provide students with smaller group settings for complex topics
- < to foster student participation in discussions
- < for activities such as drill and practice, re-teaching, and test review
- < to allow more students a chance to share their opinions or products
- < to allow students to investigate a topic from different points of view – the class could later debate the topic

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**Station Teaching (Centres)****Description:**

In this model, teachers divide students and content. Each teacher then teaches the content to one group and subsequently repeats the instruction for the other group. A third station may be set up for independent work. Rotation through stations can occur during one or several class periods.

**Sample Applications:**

- < when content is complex but not hierarchical
- < in lessons in which part of planned instruction has already been introduced in order to facilitate independent work
- < when stations will involve different tasks; for example, during language arts instruction stations may include: comprehension of a recently-read piece of literature, editing of a writing assignment, and an activity related to a skill being taught
- < in social studies, to examine the geography, economy, and culture of a region or country
- < in math, to teach a new process while reviewing applications of other concepts already presented

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**Alternative Teaching****Description:**

In this model, one teacher works with the larger group while the other works with a smaller group of students. In alternative teaching, the larger group completes the planned lesson while the smaller group either completes an alternative lesson or the same lesson at a different level. This arrangement might take an entire class period or it might be used for just a few minutes at the beginning or end of a lesson. For this approach to be successful, the purpose for the small group and its membership should vary. If both are knowledgeable of the curriculum content, either teacher may lead either group.

**Sample Applications:**

- < in situations where students' mastery of concepts taught, or about to be taught, varies tremendously
- < to provide required enrichment
- < when some students are working on a modified or alternate curriculum
- < while the larger group completes a practice exercise related to the concepts just taught; the smaller group receives additional direct instruction
- < while the larger group checks homework; the smaller group is pre-taught vocabulary related to the day's lesson
- < while the larger group is working on projects; the smaller group is being assessed

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**Team Teaching****Description:**

In this model, both teachers are delivering the same instruction at the same time. This is often called "tag team" teaching. This implies that each speaks freely during large-group instruction and moves among all the students in the class. Instruction becomes a conversation, not turn-taking. This co-teaching approach is affected more than any other by individuals' teaching styles. This is the most interpersonally complex co-teaching approach.

**Sample Applications:**

- < when the students in the class are not extremely diverse in readiness levels for that lesson or topic
- < in situations where teachers have considerable experience and a high familiarity with the topic and each other
- < when a goal of instruction is to demonstrate to students some type of interaction such as a role play or formal debate
- < in science, while one teacher explains the experiment, the other demonstrates using the necessary materials
- < in social studies, the teachers debate foreign policy issues
- < in language arts, the teachers act out a scene from a piece of literature
- < as the steps in a math process are taught, one explains while the other does a "think aloud" activity
- < one teacher talks while the other demonstrates note-taking on the board

**3. Pull-out**

**Pull-out** refers to implementation of individualized programming which occurs outside of the regular classroom.

Instruction should be offered in the least restrictive, most inclusive environment respecting the dignity of the student. Where it has been determined that outcome(s) designed for an individual student cannot be optimally met in the classroom setting, pull-out services may be required.

For a student to receive instruction in an alternate learning setting (pull-out) the following

criteria must be met:

- < It has been demonstrated that the learning cannot occur in the regular classroom.
- < The purpose, timelines, intended outcomes, and evaluation plan for the intervention must be stated.
- < There is a transition plan in place regarding returning the student to the regular classroom.

It is important that both instructional resource and classroom/subject teachers collaborate to determine whether the above criteria are met, and to collaborate on the development and implementation of transition plans.

### **Roles of Instructional resource and Classroom/Subject Teachers in Inclusive Schools**

The table that follows outlines the roles of teachers in inclusive schools; it is intended to guide teachers as they become more engaged in inclusive practices. It is recognized that the roles of instructional resource and classroom/subject teachers are evolving and that different schools are at different places in this evolution.

The level of collaboration and co-teaching in inclusive schools will be impacted by a number of variables such as: students’ diverse learning needs, teachers’ training and background, physical space, and available resources. It is expected that schools identify areas where co-teaching may be successful and begin there in order to ensure success and continued growth of this approach. Schools are encouraged to embed inclusive practices into the goals and objectives of their school development plans.

Instructional resource teachers are to continue to support students with exceptionalities. Their efforts are directed according to the administration and student support services team’s determination of student need. In instances where the instructional resource teacher is working in a classroom with students with exceptionalities, he or she may also support the learning of any other student as opportunities arise.

Although some roles are common to classroom/subject teachers and instructional resource teachers, it is important to acknowledge that both teachers bring areas of expertise from their respective fields which complement each other and enrich the teaching/learning environment.

<b>Instructional Resource Teacher</b>	<b>Classroom/Subject Teacher</b>
Provide information to the classroom/subject teacher regarding exceptionalities and the program planning process.	Provide information to the instructional resource teacher regarding curricula.
Conference with classroom/subject teacher regarding student-specific accommodations, strategies, modifications and alternate programming outcomes.	Conference with instructional resource teacher on curriculum outcomes, and instructional and assessment strategies pertinent to individual students.
Make joint decisions regarding appropriate instructional environments for alternate courses or programs.	
Assist with instructional support for Pathway 2 accommodations (such as instruction around	Take the lead in the development and delivery of curricular Pathway 2 accommodations.

<b>Instructional Resource Teacher</b>	<b>Classroom/Subject Teacher</b>
assistive technology or Behaviour Management Plans).	
As a member of the program planning team, collaborate in the development and implementation of the Behaviour Management Plan (BMP).	
Collaborate to identify co-teaching opportunities for the provision of classroom support. Teachers may want to consider things such as: IEP outcomes and Pathway 2 accommodations, teachers' familiarity with the curriculum, curriculum goals and modifications and physical arrangement of the classroom. For example, if the instructional resource teacher does not have extensive knowledge of the curriculum content, it may not be advisable to employ highly integrated co-teaching models such as team teaching. In addition, the expectations for reporting and evaluation would look quite different for teachers mainly employing the <i>One Teach, One Drift</i> model than if they were equal partners in all areas of curriculum delivery while engaged in the <i>Team Teaching</i> model.	
Provide large group, small group and individual instruction to students as determined by the instructional method(s) selected.	
Assist with identification of Pathway 3 modifications.	Take the lead in the identification and delivery of Pathway 3 modifications.
Take the lead in the development of Pathway 4/Pathway 5 courses and programs and collaborate with classroom/subject teacher in the delivery of the outcomes.	Collaborate with the instructional resource teacher regarding classroom delivery of selected outcomes of Pathway 4/Pathway 5 courses and programs.
Direct and monitor the student assistant working in the inclusive classroom.	
Take the lead in the assessment and evaluation of the outcomes of Pathway 4/Pathway 5 courses and programs in collaboration with the subject/classroom teacher.	Collaborate with the instructional resource teacher in the assessment and evaluation of the outcomes of Pathway 4/Pathway 5 courses and programs.
May support classroom/subject teacher in the assessment and evaluation of students on prescribed curriculum. The extent to which this will occur may vary depending on the combinations of pull-out, collaboration, or models of co-teaching employed. For example, if two teachers decide to parallel teach a topic in language arts, both may be responsible for assessment and evaluation of the class for that topic.	Take the lead role in assessment and evaluation of students on prescribed curriculum (Pathways 1, 2 and 3). This role may be shared with the instructional resource teacher if highly integrated models of co-teaching are employed for specific topics or units of work. Examples of highly integrated models might include extended use of parallel, team and station teaching.
Coordinate the implementation of assessment/evaluation procedures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling of tests</li> <li>• Test accommodations</li> <li>• Progress monitoring</li> <li>• Running records</li> </ul>	
Take the lead in gathering all records related to the IEP (Pathways 3, 4, 5) and any related Pathway 2 information and placing it in the	Supply the completed Pathway 2 Record of Accommodations and Pathway 3 modified courses to the instructional resource teacher.

<b>Instructional Resource Teacher</b>	<b>Classroom/Subject Teacher</b>
student's cumulative file.	
Take the lead in the recording of Pathway 4 and Pathway 5 courses and programs.	Take the lead in the recording of Pathway 2 accommodations and Pathway 3 modified courses.
Keep copies of Pathway 4 and Pathway 5 documents for regular revision and updates. These are working documents.	Keep copies of Pathway 2 and Pathway 3 documents for regular revision and updates. These are working documents.
Participate in joint parent-teacher meetings as agreed upon with the classroom/subject teacher. This could be through physical presence or by providing written comments.	Involve the instructional resource teacher in parent-teacher meetings as determined through conferencing with the instructional resource teacher.
Hold parent-teacher meetings with parents of students on Pathway 4 or Pathway 5 courses or programs. (This could be covered through joint meetings as noted above.)	Hold parent-teacher meetings for all students in class. (This could be covered through joint meetings as noted above.) For students whose program primarily occurs in a pull-out setting, (i.e., Pathway 4 life-skills based programs and Pathway 5) teachers would conference regarding the information to be shared and the format of parent teacher meetings.