



Technical Paper for Project CHILD Schools

Co-Teaching to Meet Class Size Reduction

The CHILD model offers a perfect opportunity to reduce class size through co-teaching. This occurs when two certified teachers are assigned to a specific classroom. Schools with limited classroom space may choose this option to meet class size reduction mandates.

The Project CHILD six-station format provides an ideal setting for co-teaching. For example, one teacher could be responsible for planning, coaching, and monitoring work at three stations, while the other teacher focuses on the other three stations. Another option is for one of the co-teachers to focus on the Computer Station, and begin to incorporate more powerful technology options into student learning.

Co-teaching also offers additional opportunities for differentiating instruction. The class can be grouped for specific needs, with one of the co-teachers working with designated groups at the Teacher Station, while the other co-teacher coaches and monitors the other station work.

Florida law now allows co-teaching to comply with class size requirements

HB 7087, known as the A++ Plan, was passed by the 2006 Legislature and signed into law by the Governor. This bill provides for co-teaching with certain restrictions that include:

- Requiring reasonable limits on the number of students in the classroom;
- Teacher/student ratio may not exceed constitutional limits;
- At least one of the teachers must have at least 3 years of teaching experience;
- At least one of the teachers must be teaching in their field; and,
- Teachers must receive training in team-teaching methods within 1 year after assignment.

Mentoring and retaining beginning teachers

Co-teaching also offers a wonderful venue to mentor beginning teachers. Due to chronic teacher shortages in some locations, many beginning teachers are hired through alternative certification pathways. They may have had minimal training, as well as little or no internship and student teaching experience.

Belonging to a caring cluster team, along with a supportive co-teacher, offers comfort and support to a new teacher who might otherwise flounder when isolated in a self-contained classroom. Furthermore, since the cluster team has a vested interest in assuring the success of all the students that they share, they will not let the beginner fail. Teachers who feel supported and successful will stay on the job for years to come.



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