

Co-Teaching: What it IS, What it is NOT

Element of co-teaching	Co-teaching DOES	Co-teaching does NOT
<i>“two or more professionals”</i>	Involve at least 2 credentialed professionals—indicating that co-teachers are peers having equivalent credentials and thus can truly be partners in the instructional effort. The general education curriculum provides the instructional framework, with the flexibility of it being modifiable for students who require it (Fennick, 2001).	Involve a teacher and a classroom volunteer or paraprofessional, many of whom have not had the professional preparation to co-teach nor is co-teaching an appropriate role expectation for them. This is not to say that paraprofessionals do not have important classroom roles—they just should not be asked to fulfill responsibilities of certificated staff (Friend, 2003).
<i>“joint delivery of instruction”</i>	mean both professionals coordinating and delivering substantive instruction, ensuring that both teachers have active roles. Co-teachers should work to ensure that their instructional strategies engage all students in ways that are not possible when only one teacher is present (Austin, 2001, Gately & Gately, 2001).	mean two adults merely being present in a classroom at the same time. It also does not mean that the general education teacher plans and delivers all of the lessons while the special education teacher circulates. Co-teaching does not involve taking turns lecturing to the whole group (Murawski, 2002).
<i>“diverse group of students”</i>	Allow teachers to respond effectively to diverse needs of students, lower the teacher-student ratio, and expand the professional expertise that can be applied to student needs (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001).	Include separating or grouping students with special needs in one part of the classroom or along the fringes, even if these practices are well-intentioned (Friend, 2003).
<i>“shared classroom space”</i>	Feature co-teachers instructing in the same physical space. Although small groups of students may occasionally taken to a separate location for a specific purpose and limited time, co-teaching should generally take place in a single environment—separating it from the practice of regrouping for pullout programs (Friend, 2003).	Include teaching teams that plan together but then group and instruct students in separate classrooms (Trump, 1966, Geen, 1985).