

### Best Practices for Conducting REACH Observations in Co-Teaching Settings

#### PRE-CONFERENCE

- Evaluators and teachers discuss the roles/responsibilities that general education and special education teachers will carry out during the lesson/unit of study observed. Team dynamics and parity among co-teachers can be discussed in the Pre and Post Conferences.
- It is appropriate to discuss student needs, IEP goals, and common planning time (or lack thereof) during the pre-observation conference. Teachers should select the appropriate co-teaching approach based on student needs and the lesson being delivered. Evaluators and co-teachers should discuss the selected co-teaching approach and their alignment to CCSS, IEPs, and student needs.
- Evaluators should consider the co-teaching approaches discussed in the pre-observation conference to determine the most appropriate time to observe instructional practices.

#### OBSERVATION

- Co-teachers can be observed collectively for non-evaluative coaching and feedback. It is best practice to observe co-teachers individually for REACH observations.
- Evaluators should understand that they might see multiple co-teaching methods used during a single observation. The instructional strategies are fluid; it's normal for co-teachers to transition between approaches to best meet the needs of students.
- If the Stations method is utilized, the evaluator should visit/observe each station in the classroom.

#### POST-CONFERENCE

- After an Informal observation, evaluator and teacher meet face-to-face to discuss evidence gathered and ratings assigned.
- Evidence for all components may not be visible during the observation, in such cases, evaluators can ask additional questions during the post-observation conference to determine instructional capacity.
- Factors affecting co-teaching discussed in pre- and post-observation conferences should be taken into account in component-level scoring.

Approach and descriptor	Planning Time	When To Use	Considerations for Co-Teaching Settings
<b>One Teach, One Observe</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>One teacher has primary instructional responsibility while the other gathers specific observational information on students or the (instructing) teacher. The key to this strategy is to focus the observation on specific behaviors.</i></li> </ul>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In new co-teaching situations</li> <li>• When questions arise about students</li> <li>• To check student progress</li> <li>• To compare target student to others in class</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this model, you will not see both teachers “leading” instruction.</li> <li>• One teacher will deliver instruction to the class, while the other teacher observes the class to gather information.</li> <li>• The teacher observing may not interact with the co-teacher or with students in this model.</li> <li>• This model may be used for part of a lesson to assess student progress and needs.</li> </ul>



<p><b>One Teach, One Assist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>An extension of One Teach, One Observe, one of the teachers has a primary instructional responsibility while the other assists students' with their work, monitors behaviors, and/or gives feedback on tasks. The teacher who assists often lends a voice to students or groups who would hesitate to participate or add comments.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Low</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the lesson lends itself to delivery by one teacher</li> <li>When one teacher has particular expertise for the lesson</li> <li>In new co-teaching situations</li> <li>In lessons stressing a process in which students work needs close monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this model, you will not see both teachers "leading" instruction.</li> <li>One teacher delivers instruction to the class, while the other teacher assists students individually or in small groups as needed.</li> <li>The teacher assisting should adapt to the needs of the students throughout the lesson, and may depart from the instructional practices discussed in the pre-observation conference.</li> <li>The special education teacher may be assisting students with IEPs as well as students without IEPs.</li> <li>The teacher(s) will be providing assistance with various student needs, including understanding directions and other communication, academic, social/emotional, independent functioning, etc.</li> <li>This model lends itself to providing scaffolding and individualized supports to students.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Station Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>The co-teaching pair divides the instructional content into parts. Each teacher instructs one of the groups; groups then rotate or spend a designated amount of time at each station. Often an independent station will be used along with the teacher-led stations.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When content is complex but not hierarchical</li> <li>In lessons in which part of planned instruction is review</li> <li>When several topics comprise instruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this model, teachers deliver instruction to small groups and students will be at a variety of stations throughout the class.</li> <li>Stations may be addressing components of one instructional goal/unit, or may be addressing separate learning objectives.</li> <li>All students may not be visiting each station or working toward the same objectives.</li> <li>Teachers are likely delivering different content in their respective stations.</li> <li>Teachers may not interact with each other during the lesson.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Parallel Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Each teacher instructs half the students. The two teachers are addressing the same instructional material using similar teaching strategies. The greatest benefit to this approach is the reduction of student-to-teacher ratio.</i></li> </ul>	<p>Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When a lower adult-student ratio is needed to improve instructional efficiency</li> <li>To foster student participation in discussions</li> <li>For activities such as drill and practice, re-teaching, and test review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In this model, each teacher delivers the same content to a portion of the class.</li> <li>Teachers may be using different styles and strategies to reach multiple learning profiles.</li> <li>Groups may be heterogeneous or divided based on student needs; grouping may be flexible and could change during the lesson.</li> <li>Groups will be working toward identical or similar learning objectives; IEP goals and benchmarks as well as student needs will be taken into account; assigned tasks may be not be the same for all students.</li> <li>Teachers may not have opportunities for interaction with each other during the lesson.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Alternative Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alternative teaching strategies provide two different approaches to teaching the same information. Supplemental implies the strategy allows one teacher to work with students at their expected level, while the other teacher works with those students who need the information and/or materials extended or remediated. The objective of the lesson is the same for all students, however the avenue for getting there is different.</i></li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where students' mastery of concepts taught varies tremendously</li> <li>• When extremely high levels of mastery are expected for all students</li> <li>• When enrichment is desired</li> <li>• When some students are working in a parallel curriculum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this model, teachers deliver different instruction to groups of students.</li> <li>• Teachers may be using different styles and strategies to reach multiple learning profiles.</li> <li>• Groups may be heterogeneous based on student needs; grouping may be flexible and could change during the lesson.</li> <li>• Groups may or may not be working toward similar learning objectives; IEP goals and benchmarks as well as student needs will be taken into account, and assigned tasks may be not be the same for all students.</li> <li>• Teachers may not have opportunities for interaction with each other during the lesson.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Team Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Well-planned, team-taught lessons exhibit an invisible flow of instruction with no prescribed division of authority. Using a team teaching strategy, both teachers are actively involved in the lesson. From a student's perspective, there is no clearly defined leader, as both teachers share the instruction, interject information, and assist students by answering questions.</i></li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When two heads are better than one or experience is comparable or complementary The teachers have a high sense of comfort and compatibility During a lesson in which instructional conversation is appropriate When a goal of instruction is to demonstrate some type of interaction to students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In this model, both teachers deliver instruction to the whole class in a single, large group.</li> <li>• Teachers may deliver instruction in different ways to address different learning styles and needs.</li> <li>• Teachers will interact with each other throughout the lesson in complimentary roles to deliver the instruction.</li> <li>• This model requires a well-developed relationship between the co-teachers, a large amount of common planning time, and parity between the two teachers.</li> </ul>

Adapted from Creating Schools that Support ALL Students, Marilyn Friend, Ph.D.