

## **Mentor Teaching with the Co-teaching Model**

Welcome to the School of Teacher Education and Leadership at Utah State University!

We are pleased that you have agreed to mentor one of our teacher candidates. As a teacher, you know how important it is to receive quality mentoring during preparation. We hope you see this as a way to "pay it forward" and support the teaching profession as a teacher leader.

This overview will acquaint you with the principles and practices of co-teaching, the mentoring model that we use.

### **Mentoring**

Your job as a mentor is incredibly important. You will need to:

- periodically observe your student teacher and provide feedback
- debrief with your student teacher after they are taught
- review lesson plans before they are taught
- observe your student teacher interacting with students outside the classroom
- facilitate your student teacher's participation in grade level team meetings, department meetings, faculty meetings, PLCs, professional development, parent/teacher conferences, etc.
- provide written formative and summative feedback using a rubric and narrative comments

### **Using the Co-teaching Model**

Co-teaching is a model for mentoring that involves the student teacher and mentor teacher working in collaboration, side-by-side, for the entire experience. The mentor teacher should not exit the classroom for a period of time. This "sink or swim" model is not effective or productive for the mentor teacher, student teacher, or students in the classroom.

In a co-teaching configuration:

- Two teachers work together with groups of students and share the planning, organization, delivery, and assessment of instruction.
- Although it is a partnership, the mentor teacher is still responsible for content, implementation, and management and is the teacher of record and final authority in the classroom.
- The student teacher has similar responsibilities as the mentor teacher, but they build up gradually.
- There is no "takeover" time; instead the student teacher's responsibilities increase gradually so that for the last four weeks the student teacher and mentor teacher share instructional time relatively equally.

### **Goals for co-teaching model of student teaching**

- Student teacher has larger amount of productive contact time with students
- Student teacher teaches and plans more, but in collaboration with mentor teacher
- Student teacher and mentor teacher develop a partnership
- University supervisor facilitates partnership between student teacher and mentor teacher

How TO co-teach	How <b>NOT</b> to co-teach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student teacher and mentor teacher plan collaboratively</li> <li>• Mentor teacher gradually increases responsibility for student teacher, but student teacher does not “take over”</li> <li>• Student teacher participates in department or grade level team planning</li> <li>• Supervisor is a facilitator</li> <li>• Mentor teacher addresses problems/issues first; supervisor intervenes if needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor teacher gets extra prep time out of the classroom</li> <li>• Mentor teacher leaves the classroom</li> <li>• Student teacher writes lesson plans alone</li> <li>• Student “takes over” for 2 weeks</li> <li>• Student “sinks or swims”</li> <li>• Supervisor is THE authority figure who swoops in to address problems</li> </ul>

### Co-teaching Strategies

The following is not a sequential or hierarchical list of co-teaching strategies. At the beginning of student teaching experience, some strategies will be more appropriate than others. Once both co-teachers are comfortable working with each other, the co-teachers are encouraged to vary the strategies and roles, as appropriate.

#### *One Teach, One Observe*

Student teacher participates in planning and then during instruction is on his/her feet, visibly present to students, and actively observing both the mentor teacher and the student behavior in the environment.

#### *One Teach, One Assist*

One teacher takes the lead in the delivery of instruction, while the other teacher circulates, monitors, and assists where needed.

#### *Station Teaching*

Both teachers prepare and teach different parts of the instruction in separate locations in the room; both teachers are primary instructors at their station.

#### *Parallel teaching*

Class is divided into two groups; each teacher presents the same curriculum using different strategies or different levels of difficulty.

#### *Supplemental teaching*

One teacher works with a small group to re-teach, pre-teach, or enrich while the other teacher instructs the rest of the class.

#### *Team teaching*

Both teachers participate in the delivery of instruction equally; no clearly defined lead teacher in the lesson. Requires lots of trust and compatible delivery styles.

If you have any questions or would like further information about mentoring your student teacher or about co-teaching strategies, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you,

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