Agency of Education Co-Teaching

# Purpose

Co-teaching is an evidence-based practice identified as a service model that supports students with disabilities. Co-teaching is one way to deliver services to students with disabilities as part of a philosophy of inclusive practices. In Vermont, co-teaching is defined by the State Board of Education Regulation §2360.2.12(b)(1)(i). The following application will guide you through a process toward creating a co-teaching plan that aligns with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requirements, allowing you to access IDEA funds for some of its implementation.

# Regulations: Vermont Special Education Rules 2013

## Definition:

*Co-teaching is an instructional delivery approach in which a classroom teacher and a special education teacher share responsibility for planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction for a group of students, some of which have Individual Education Plans (IEPs). It involves two or more licensed professionals;*

* playing an active role in jointly planning and delivering instruction and assessing student learning. This means that the two educators need shared time to prepare for and evaluate co-teaching. While paraprofessionals play an important role in classrooms, they do not have the professional training to be co-teachers.
* responding to the diverse needs of students in a manner that would not be possible for one teacher. Co-teaching has numerous advantages such as sharing of professional expertise and lowering the teacher to student ratio.
* instructing in the same classroom space. Co-teaching does not mean that two teachers will plan together and then work with groups of students in separate spaces. While this might happen occasionally it is not a regular practice in co-teaching.

As with any IEP service, the effectiveness of co-teaching should be reviewed and progress on co-teaching goals reported. If progress towards IEP goals addressed through co-teaching is not satisfactory over time, as evidenced in ongoing assessment data, the IEP team should consider whether changes to the IEP are needed.

## Regulations:

Section 2360.2.12(b)(1)(i) of the SBE rules states: *(A) Co-teaching service is the delivery of special education services in the general education classroom provided jointly by the general education teacher and a special education teacher.*

*1) By selecting the co-teaching services model, the IEP team has determined that there is no compelling reason why the child’s instruction cannot be provided jointly in the general education classroom. The general education teacher shall be an active participant in IEP meetings.*

*2) The general education and special education teachers will review and document each child’s progress toward objectives and IEP goals.*

*3) Should a progress review at any grading period indicate that a child is in danger of failing a course or is not making satisfactory progress towards IEP goals, the IEP team shall meet immediately to:*

*a) Determine continued co-teaching services or change of placement, and*

*b) Revise the IEP as appropriate.*

*4) In order to offer co-teaching services, the LEA must complete a plan for implementation which includes continuous professional development and submit the plan to the Vermont Agency of Education for approval.*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines special education to include specially designed instruction that addresses the unique needs resulting from a child’s disability and ensures that the child will be able to access and progress in the general curriculum in order to meet grade level educational standards that apply to all students. An IEP team may decide that co-teaching is the best way to provide specially designed instruction for an individual child. This decision would require participation and agreement by IEP team members and be reflected in the goals and services included in the IEP. The Agency of Education (AOE) recommends that instructional services to be provided through co-teaching should reflect “special educator” as provider and “co-teaching” in the group size column on the service page of the IEP.

# Training Requirement:

Training is required for all educators who will be co-teaching. The training must be approved by the AOE and delivered by a qualified individual. Please see application and application checklist for more details.

# Application checklist

According to Section 2360.2.12(4) under Special Education Services, in order to offer co-teaching services, the LEA must complete ***a plan for implementation*** which includes continuous professional development and submit the plan to the Vermont AOE for approval.

An approvable plan will:

Indicate process for training by qualified individuals for all educators who will be co-teaching - Delivery of training by qualified personnel who has demonstrated experience implementing co-teaching in general classroom settings. Specify which pairs of co-teaches will be trained, grade level(subject), number of students for whom this service is chosen.

Identify dedicated time for teachers to develop the skills and knowledge needed to successfully implement co-teaching; as well as practice and reflection time identified in the co-teaching plan timeline. (evidence might include meeting notes, data analysis outcomes, aha moments…).

Address at a minimum the content of a course syllabus which includes a scope and sequence of co-teaching professional learning (if a formal course is included).

Identify specific co-teaching resources and materials that support deep understanding of the practice.

Include team training opportunities with representation from both general and special education teachers, as well as building and/or district-level administration. An Equivalent of 2 graduate credits or 20 hours of coursework in co-teaching is required.

Outline a time frame for follow-up reporting, to the AOE, of measured effectiveness -evaluation processes.

Include opportunities for the participants to practice and apply the theoretical concepts of co-teaching.

Document that the SU leadership supports the use of the co-teaching model, which might include a supervision schedule of co-teaching staff by an administrator. This ensures fidelity of your co-teaching model.

# Application Process

An application (below) with a school plan for co-teaching will be reviewed and approved by the assigned personnel at the Vermont AOE through the following process:

1. An LEA will fill out the Co-Teaching Application to request a co-teaching plan approval. This application is available on the AOE website and can additionally be requested through the Special Education Technical Assistance Line.
   1. A draft of a plan can be submitted for a review and input from the AOE before being formally submitted.
2. After a plan is received, the Special Education Team Coordinator approves the content and/or sends the electronic copy back for revision.
3. Once the plan is approved, the Special Education Team Coordinator returns an electronic copy with the Special Education Team Coordinator signature of approval.
4. A copy of the signed and approved co-teaching plan is kept on file at the AOE.
5. The AOE **will seek follow-up data** to determine the effectiveness of co-teaching models across the state as well as any needs schools, SU/SDs might have with regard to technical assistance and professional development.

# Additional Notes:

Please review existing co-teaching plans for relevancy and contact the AOE with any questions or when revisions are required.

In an effort to encourage consistency of co-teaching across the State of Vermont, the AOE would like feedback on how co-teaching pairs are supporting students. Please consider submitting a video illustrating successful co-teaching practices. The long to goal is to support co-teaching in action and create an on-line video catalog of Vermont teachers implementing different co-teaching models.

# Co-Teaching Training SU/SD Plan

School/Supervisory Union:       Date:

Contact:

Approved/Not Approved:       Date:

Comments:

1. How will staff receive initial training in co teaching?

*If you are not participating in an established course.*

1. What on-going support and coaching will be provided to staff involved in co teaching?
2. How will new or additional staff who co-teach in the future be trained?
3. How will administrative support and time for establishing and maintaining relationships, planning lessons, assessing student learning, etc. be provided?
4. Who will plan, deliver or facilitate the co teaching training? Describe this person’s qualification.
5. What texts or other resources will be used?
6. What is the specific schedule for the co-teaching training?
7. Briefly describe how the following will be addressed
8. Developing a common vision for co-teaching.
9. Definition and models for co-teaching including principles and practices for inclusion.
10. Selection of co-teaching partners, establishing and maintaining the partnerships.
11. Essentials for co-teaching partnerships including communication, collaboration, conflict resolution and self-reflection.
12. Submit a list or chart of the names, grades (or subject taught) of co- teaching partnerships that include a general educator and special educator.  Please include the number of students you anticipate this service for.
13. Set up and submit to the AOE a time frame for follow-up reporting of
    1. measured effectiveness-how and when you plan to evaluate this service model,
    2. what data you will be collecting and at what frequency,
    3. a supervision schedule where administrators document implementation fidelity and that trainings happened as planned,
    4. agenda(s), and attendance list for all trainings-past and future
    5. evidence of dedicated time (i.e. notes, trainings, readings, take-aways, application of learnings).

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Contact person:       Email:

Needs Revision:  Approved:

By whom:       Date: