

The Pennsylvania State University

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College of Education

**AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF A COLLABORATION WITHIN  
A SECONDARY CO-TEACHING INCLUSIVE SETTING**

A Dissertation in

Curriculum and Instruction

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the collaboration of co-teachers in a secondary inclusive setting through an autoethnographic approach. “In terms of labels, autoethnography is derived from *ethnography*, a research method primarily concerned with studying the other” (Starr, 2010, p. 3). Additionally, this research approach embraces personal experiences as data and uses narrative as a vehicle for sharing such data with the reader. The traditional format of a dissertation creates the framework for this dissertation. However, some literary terms accompany sections to guide the reader.

The data collected from artifacts, journals, emails, presentations, memos, and personal experience reflect the complexity of collaboration in a co-teaching setting between a biology teacher and myself, a reading specialist. Despite knowing the models of collaboration and embracing many of the characteristics of collaboration, significant struggle occurred. This study captures the process of collaboration, including the struggle; reveals strategies that supported us through struggle; and discusses implications collaboration has for moving toward a secondary inclusive model.

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **Introduction**

Student learning has always been and continues to be the fundamental goal of education. Unfortunately, the attempts to achieve this goal at the secondary level are limited due to the evolved organization of the structure that allows for little change. This structure restrains the culture of school to a given number of classes to be held over a given number of minutes with each class taught by one teacher. Consequently, this traditional school structure still does not meet the needs of all students.

The high school studied in this autoethnographic case study has questioned how best to meet the needs of all students, including an identified population, in such a static structure. The organic nature of this inclusive program along with supportive and trusting administration influenced the program's beginnings and growth. The following study captures one collaborative relationship that formed, struggled, and then flourished within the high school's inclusive program called the Collaborative Teaching Initiative (CTI).

#### **The Need for Inclusion**

“All students are regular education students first. The only way they become something else is by us not meeting their needs,” - Assistant Director of Special Education

Even though our past, our traditions, and our culture all echo words of freedom and personal rights, we still exclude in one of the primary experiences that helps shape who we will become; we exclude in education. With recognition of exclusionary practices and with the help of *Brown v. Board of Education*, laws have been created such

as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), passed in 1975, emphasizing that students with disabilities have the right to access general education. However we have learned from history that words do not promise action. In order for inclusive education to be embraced by our society, we must acknowledge our exclusive traditions, value all children, practice what is written in the law, and reform education.

Exclusive traditions are found in the everyday practices of school. Teachers, parents, and students have all voiced concerns, complaints, and such about various aspects of school and yet our society answers with that familiar head nod and half smile, suggesting a “been-there-done-that” reply. We know how hard the science book is to read. We know that the class size is too big. We know that the rules can be bent for some students but not for others. We know that not everyone is included in education; however, year after year the system often remains unchanged and the question still lingers: “... Is the disability in the child, or is the disability in the education system we have created?” (Villa & Thousand, 2000, p. 24).

Even with obvious concerns about the history of exclusionary practices of education, children are affected academically and socially by exclusion everyday. There are children who leave the classroom during reading time in order to address their skill deficiencies. There are children who cannot go to the cafeteria because they have to meet with the “special” teacher. What is being gained in these scenarios and what is being lost? “Exclusion of a child from general education, conversely, instructs the child that *belonging* is not forthcoming – that it is not a basic human right but something that must be earned” (Villa & Thousand, 2000, p. 17). Not only are schools implying that such students do not belong but educators are also sending a message to those students

considered to be part of the mainstream that it is acceptable to exclude. The tradition continues, but where will it stop?

As long as the tradition of exclusion continues, there will be people who push back - who not only recognize the importance of inclusive education but also strive for the full implementation of it. Teachers, administrators, and parents recognize IDEA and are continuing to develop a full understanding of the extent of the law and how it supports the inclusion of students with disabilities. It is becoming less and less acceptable to say to a special educator that his or her student cannot be in a general education classroom.

Clearly exclusion is a part of our educational tradition; nevertheless, inclusive education needs to continue to be the direction of reform. In addition to the diversity of students being recognized, such as learning style, and accepted in inclusive education, we must remember the uniqueness of schools across the country. Acknowledging the unique differences of schools, McLesky & Waldron (2002) suggest when planning for inclusive education reform schools must consider their individual characteristics, asking themselves how and what should be taught. In addition, McLesky (2002) suggests schools must examine how the school is organized to deliver instruction. Just as no one standardized test can truly rate a student's learning, one inclusive program cannot fit every school. We learned in kindergarten that a square peg does not fit into a round hole. When that square peg did not fit in the round hole, we did not give up, but rather we searched for a place where it did fit. When it comes to education, this motivation to find an appropriate fit made us more capable to play the game. We must remember this simple

lesson learned so early on in life not every child will be that round peg that fits in the round hole.

“They [children with disabilities] are a gift because they force educators to break the paradigm of traditional schooling and try new things so that they are more capable of meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities *and* those of many other students” (Villa & Thousand, 2000, p. 21). The system of education, as well as our society, needs to embrace the rights of all students and their ability to learn and socially function in society, regardless of a label or not. Sodak (2003) mentions the importance of classroom membership, collaboration versus competition, and the importance of classroom rules that encourage respect. Because inclusive education not only rightfully and respectfully includes all students education as a whole will expand to embrace the idea of difference; difference will no longer be the element that separates or segregates but rather the element that is embraced and included. “Inclusion is not about making all education special; it is about creating a single system of education that works for all students” (Lilly, 2000, p.6).

### **CTI Origins (Prologue)**

Toward the end of the 1998/1999 school year, after gathering data on the needs of the incoming freshmen learning support students, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade learning support teacher Ashley, realized that the needs of these students outweighed the capacity of the current special education structure at the high school. The learning support model offered at the time focused on daily small-group instruction during study hall periods and/or direct instruction in specific curricular areas such as English and mathematics (the pull out

model). Thus far, some of the ramifications for the students who participated in this learning support model resulted in labeling, a negative distinction unfortunately acknowledged by peers as well as by some teachers. This model created negative outcomes for learning support students that special educators did not want to continue to promote.

However, not all learning support students were placed in direct instruction classes, some were placed in the regular education or mainstream classes. Despite being in the least restrictive environment, special education students still struggled. Reacting to this struggle, Ashley led a team of learning support teachers in assessing the compatibility of current 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' fluency and reading comprehension to texts used in the mainstream classrooms. Learning support students' reading levels were assessed using Curriculum Based Assessments (CBAs) developed by the learning support specialists. The results indicated students' fluency measured in the instructional to independent level but their reading comprehension measured in the frustration level. Students were not able to independently read and comprehend texts used in the current, grade level curriculum. Clearly, business could not continue as usual. In contrast, learning support students in the upper grades (11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>) did not share in this identified academic struggle. The number of levels offered in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades for core classes such as math, English, science, and history provided students with more appropriate materials, which allowed them easier access to the curriculum and more full engagement. This change in course level offerings and student engagement from 9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade was an observable difference noted to be a major reason for the beginnings of CTI.

CTI was initiated because especially the learning support teachers saw that there was a need that was not being met as far as the level of teaching. In ... 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, there seemed to be three levels of teaching or three levels of instruction and it was meeting the needs of all students because it was advanced, regular, and less than regular ... maybe not college prep ... In this building (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>) there were only two levels of instruction. So, they felt there needed to be three levels to meet the needs of the many students that were coming in this year from the middle level. So that is how it got started ... out of need and then a lot of people got involved with it. (Program Participant)

With the realization of this issue, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade learning support teacher, Ashley, began to share her concerns with other teachers. One teacher Ashley turned to was 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher, Barbara. Barbara was working as a mentor with the secondary Professional Development School (PDS). Barbara suggested that perhaps the university professor supporting the PDS could assist with this concern through the added support of personnel from the secondary PDS. These hallway chats on how to address this capacity issue while best serving the students lead to the calling of what is now known as “The Meeting.” This is how one teacher’s inquiry created a bottom-up movement that created the Collaborative Teaching Initiative (CTI).

With the hopes of creating a better experience for students receiving special education services, “The Meeting” was organized in April of 1999. In attendance were the high school administration, the coordinators of the departments (Barbara represented the English coordinator), the Assistant Director of Special Education, and the professor of the on-site PDS. This meeting is often referred to by attendees as one of the most

powerful meetings that they experienced during their professional careers with regard to acknowledging the need of the students, brainstorming effective solutions, and then initiating the change. The change did not in fact add a level of instruction to the content area classes in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade but rather influenced a change in philosophy. Pull-out classes for learning support students had not been the answer and adding another level of class would be very similar to the already existing pull-out classes. Those in attendance felt that including students in general classrooms, adding an additional adult, and applying curricular adaptations and modifications would result in student achievement and provide all students with access to the curriculum.

According to the Assistant Director of Special Education three factors fell into place that made this meeting so significant and unique to him:

1. All present at the meeting agreed and recognized the issue with the placement of learning support students outside of general education classes. In addition, there was also recognition of the CBA data from students placed in general education classrooms. Furthermore, those present saw these issues as something that needed to be addressed immediately.
2. After reviewing the need, those present came to a consensus on a plan. There would need to be smaller content area classes, with a decreased population, and there needed to be two adults to support all the learners' needs.
3. Discussion began immediately on how to make this plan work for the next school year. In fact, the building principal at the

time, leaped out of her chair and began to rework the master schedule on the whiteboard in the room.

The Assistant Director of Special Education had never been part of a meeting that involved no discord despite the rather significant ramifications that this change would wreak on the entire school culture.

Another person present at the meeting, Barbara, who sat in for the English coordinator, recalls the meeting being a “slam dunk.” Barbara remembers how the building principal was immediately onboard. In addition, a vivid memory of the building principal jumping out of her chair and going straight to the whiteboard to begin brainstorming scheduling stays with Barbara to this day. The room possessed a “can do” atmosphere that focused on what kids need. There was no recollection of any negative comments but rather many responses like “of course we can do that.” Barbara felt that those present were people willing and even eager to embrace the ambiguity of the initiative because it was the right thing to do for our students.

It is not very often in one’s career that so many people agree to make such an important and significant change in such a short period of time. It was the right time, with the right people, who all agreed that this was the right move to stop excluding. The administrators participating encouraged, motivated, and supported this inclusion initiative immediately. Interestingly, three people who participated in “the Meeting” also were parents of students with special needs; two of them were administrators.

## **Mission Statement and Guiding Questions**

During “The Meeting” a shared philosophy was acknowledged that all students could learn and this goal could be achieved without a change in curriculum or additional levels of content area classes being added. Why would it be beneficial to create homogeneous groups that lacked role models? What would be essential would be the use of various instructional approaches and resources that would be critical to scaffold and enhance learning experiences for learning support students. Research (e.g., Eshilian, Falvery, Bove, Hibbard, Laiblin, Miller, & Rosenberg, 2000) agrees that “rather than grouping students so they experience learning only with others who learn at the same pace and in the same way, grouping so students learn to work within a diverse community undoubtedly better prepares them for the heterogeneous ‘real world’” (p. 408). We believed that what was critical for some truly was good for all. With that pivotal understanding, a mission statement was created along with ongoing questions for CTI work, which would provide focus on collaboration, professional development, and curriculum:

**Mission Statement:** All students can achieve excellence in education through establishing high expectations for them and facilitating their participation in the school curriculum to the fullest extent possible.

### **Ongoing Questions For Our Work**

1. What strategies do teachers need for ongoing collaboration?
  - Classroom management skills
  - Problem solving strategies

- Time management skills
  - Communication skills
2. What are the goals of each particular small group collaboration? What measures will tell us that we have achieved our goals?
  3. What are our resources and support and how can they be most effectively utilized? (*Developed Summer 1999*)

The mission statement and ongoing questions, which are distributed every year, reflect the three foundational themes of CTI – (1) administrative support, (2) curriculum development, and (3) collaboration. Furthermore, since this document is shared every year with all participants and the ongoing questions are reviewed and updates provided, CTI participants are aware that this initiative is valued.

### **CTI Logistics**

Shortly after the initial meeting, those who were present in addition to some special education teachers and content area teachers formed the Secondary Inclusive Practices Committee. This committee continued to express the “can-do” attitude that many experienced at “The Meeting.” The Assistant Director of Special Education and the Associate Principal for Curriculum Development emerged as significant supporters of this initiative. These two administrators helped to facilitate discussions, promote professional development, and communicate the progress of the initiative to all involved.

In order to make CTI a reality, many logistics still needed to be addressed. A few days after “The Meeting,” content area coordinators returned to their respective departments to share the details of the new initiative. Also, discussion continued on how smaller classes would create some larger classes in each content area. Coordinators reported back and the Assistant Director of Special Education shared the following memo that captured department reactions as well as happenings of “The Meeting”:

**Memo from the Assistant Director of Special Education to Secondary**

**Inclusive Practices Committee-**

**April 20, 1999**

**Re: Notes from April 15, 1999 Meeting**

All departments reported enthusiastic responses from their respective departments regarding the offering of a couple of sections of smaller classes fro next school year... The Special Education Department indicated they are currently meeting to develop the best service delivery model to support the suggested configuration changes within regular education while maintaining the appropriate level of support as indicated by a student’s IEP. Thankfully, for us visual learners, the building principal was able to graphically display the suggested configurations.

The PDS professor indicated he believed they could supply an additional six interns (above the existing English interns) to be assigned to one class per day for the entire year.

There was a lot of discussion regarding scheduling and how to proceed. We

decided on gathering some additional data and return findings to the building principal by April 23. Data to be gathered included Ashley reviewing currently submitted course selections for Applied Math and Technology students and denoting who are identified special education students. I (Assistant Director of Special Education) was to obtain additional clarification from the eighth grade learning support teachers on appropriate class assignments and configurations for incoming ninth graders based on the proposed offering for next year – regular class, team, smaller class, applied academics and direct instruction (English & math). The building principal has graciously offered to oversee the hand scheduling of the identified and at risk students.

The Associate Principal for Curriculum Development, South Building reading specialist, and I will be meeting this week to explore possibilities for providing inservice opportunities on collaborative practices.

**Together** we are making a difference!

Such types of communication were informative, inclusive, supportive, collaborative, trusting, and motivating. Collaboration between special education and general education departments as well as the university and school expanded. The administration's communication and enthusiasm created a focus so the initiative could begin in September. Not only had school structure with regard to class size begun to change through the discussions of inclusion but also for the first time, the Assistant Director of Special Education took on a visible role in general education. In fact, his

collaboration with the administrators on the committee became a role model for the merging of special and general education.

### **Initial Classroom Size and Composition**

One of the first factors determined was classroom size and composition. It was decided by those involved in “The Meeting” that English, science, social studies, and math would have two classes in both 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade, with class size limited to 18 students. Each class would have up to 40% of the students with IEPs. The rest of the roster would be students in regular education. Among these regular education students there could also be reading deficient students. Departments in turn agreed to increase class size in some other classes to allow the classes of 18 to exist. In addition, the administration agreed to place two adults in every classroom. The additional personnel could be a learning support teacher, a paraprofessional, or a PDS intern.

Such information continued to be shared via memo from the Assistant Director of Special Education to the Secondary Inclusive Practices Committee as committee members continued to work on making this initiative happen by September 1999.

**Memo from the Assistant Director of Special Education to Secondary**

**Inclusive Practices Committee-**

**May 14, 1999**

**Re: Notes from May, 13, 1999 Meeting**

The first order of business needs to be recognition and a sincere thank you to the building principal and those who work on the master schedule for their tireless efforts with the tedious task of scheduling the commended students into the new

offerings for next year. We appreciate all the factors and considerations that need to go into these decisions and your ability to keep these in mind as you work within a given set of parameters. You are remarkable! Thanks!! ...

... the PDS professor indicated the availability of 7 interns for next year – 5 of whom are graduate students. He made suggestions on the possible best placement and use of the interns given the smaller class configurations. The PDS professor will be joining the inservice planning team so we can direct some appropriate inservicing for this group prior to the start of next year.

Special education indicated their support for the additional smaller classes through collaboration with the regular education teacher. This would also include additional personnel in the classroom. In some instances this would be a learning support teacher, learning support paraprofessional, or a combination. The learning support teachers are currently looking at their caseloads for next year, what classes these students are currently in, and then how best to design their schedule to optimize their availability to be in the smaller classes. We will be meeting again as a department the week of 5/24.

Inservice support:

Survey results show a strong preference for our first inservice the afternoon of June 10, 1999. I would suggest penciling this one in. You will be receiving more information for exact time and location in the near future.

The Associate Principal for Curriculum Development, South Building reading specialist, and I met to begin inservice planning and support. Prior to the June 10 meeting, we will be meeting again with the addition of the PDS professor to plan the June 10 agenda and make additional plans for inservice support next year.

Please feel free to submit suggestions to any one of us...

... I would appreciate if the department coordinators would share this information with the teachers in their departments who will be teaching the smaller classes and teams for next year.

Thank you for all your continued cooperation and efforts.

With so much change happening in such a short period of time, the administrators involved in this inclusion initiative communicated their vision continuously, collaborated, discussed and planned professional development, personally scheduled students and committed their time and efforts to supporting this initiative. The administrators involved were instrumental in the success of this program.

### **Continuing Administrative Support**

As summer months approached, the inclusion initiative continued to be a priority for all involved. In addition the developing initiative began to be embraced by more special education and content area teachers. Interested teachers along with the existing

committee gathered together to discuss the many changes that this initiative would bring in the upcoming school year. Below is a memo capturing reactions to the meeting and meeting notes, which detailed concerns and opportunities shared by those present.

**Memo from The Associate Principal for Curriculum Development, South Building reading specialist, PDS professor and the Assistant Director of Special Education to Interested participants (department coordinators, content area teachers, learning support teachers, learning support paraprofessionals, and university interns)**

**Date: July 7, 1999**

**Re: Secondary Inclusive Practices Inservice**

Thanks to all of you for participating in our inclusive practices initiative on June 10<sup>th</sup>. Based on the critical thinking exhibited, the creative ideas shared, the enthusiasm expressed, and the sense of humor present, it appears we are off to a positive start.

Several people have signed up for the inservice committee. The first meeting will be on Friday, July 16 at 10:00 in the North Building counseling office conference room (which is air conditioned). If you signed up for the committee, please call the Assistant Director of Special Education's office (xxx-xxxx) to let us know if you are able to attend. If you did not sign up for the committee but are interested, it's not too late! Again, just call Assistant Director of Special Education.

Several of us were talking at the end of the meeting and remarked that the group's focus had shifted slightly from inclusion to a broader interest in collaborative teaching. We thought, then, that a more accurate name for our work might be the Secondary Collaborative Teaching Initiative. It seems to emphasize our interest in working together for the benefit of all students.

On the back of this memo you will find the notes from our meeting. Please give us feedback on the name change and forward any additional ideas or thoughts you have.

#### SUMMARY

#### SECONDARY INCLUSIVE PRACTICES INITIATIVE MEETING

JUNE 10, 1999 12:30-3:30 PENN STATER

GOAL: To help is focus on this initiative for Fall 1999

#### CONCERNS/OPPORTUNITIES

- Don't want support services to do things that students could do on their own
- Students challenged to work on own
- Develop new aspects of content/activities for the curriculum
- Create more world content for classroom ideas
  - meaningful
  - value-positive consequences
  - enabling
- Get to know students better/sooner – collaborative conversations on

shared experiences

- Not interact with classes as less than – diverse learners supported
- Support teacher strategies – note taking, debrief difficulties
- Time for collaboration
- Pink slips – progress reports – help focus support – ongoing evaluations

#### INFORMATION SHARING

- Monitoring progress
- Reducing number of forms or replacing
- Make students more responsible/reflective e of own needs
- Parent communication
- Increase communication about learning activities with smaller numbers and support structure
- Year by year structure of support – evaluation. Have to work together.

This June 10<sup>th</sup> meeting reflected so many aspects of this faculty's desire and dedication to this initiative as well as the continual, positive involvement of the administration. There was recognition of special educators and their expertise of strategies, reflection on curriculum development and the need for more real world activities, and the beginnings of collaboration through discussions of students and their needs. In addition, the need for administrative support emerged as a foundational element to catalyze curriculum development and collaboration. "Schools with shared vision and cultures of communication and shared decision making, and schools that

involve teachers in the design of the innovation, are more likely to sustain innovations (Florian, 2000; Huberman & Miles, 1984, cited in Sindelar et al., 2006, p. 318). The goal was to implement this program, renamed at the June 10 meeting as the Collaborative Teaching Initiative, in September and those involved kept the momentum going to achieve this goal.

### **The Steering Committee**

In order to establish and guide the Collaborative Teaching Initiative for the 1999/2000 school year, the CTI Steering Committee naturally formed. As participants involved in “The Meeting” as well as some interested teachers attended professional development opportunities, focusing on inclusive practices, a core group of members emerged. These members included the South Building Principal, Assistant Director of Special Education, Associate Principal for Curriculum Development, the PDS professor, and a South Building reading specialist. These core members formed the first CTI Steering Committee.

This group focused on how to take what transpired in “The Meeting” and make it a reality in a traditional school culture, which emphasized boundaries and isolation. There needed to be not only an accepting of inclusion in general education classrooms but also teachers who would be willing to take risks and allow other professionals in their once isolated places. In addition, special education teachers and paraprofessionals would be learning a new role in the school as collaborators in general education classrooms. In order to support this new idea of collaborative partnerships, the administration along with

the Steering Committee planned the continuous professional development that was necessary to sustain the change they agreed needed to happen.

### **CTI Content Teachers**

Focusing on such student needs as literacy difficulties and the diverse methodologies needed for inclusive classrooms, the Steering Committee discussed how teachers would become participants in the CTI program. Through numerous conversations with department coordinators, the Steering Committee strongly recommended teachers be invited to participate in CTI. Being the pilot year of the program, there was serious concern of the success for the program if teachers were assigned to teach a CTI class versus a teacher expressing interest in being part of the program. “Scheduling students with disabilities in the correct class with the right teachers is fundamental to making inclusion work. Some teachers work better with certain types of students ...” (Cawley, 2000, pp. 41-42). The Steering Committee felt since the pilot was small that the best chance for success and sustainability would be to have those teachers who expressed interested on board instead of any teacher simply being assigned.

Prior to the CTI program, certain teachers emerged, who worked well with an at-risk population. As flattering as this was to some teachers, this label was also very trying at times and resulted in teacher burnout due to the amount of special need students placed in these teachers’ classes. However, CTI would not only benefit from recruiting such teachers but CTI would provide support to these teachers through professional development, placing another adult in the classroom, limiting the amount of special needs

students in each class, and providing opportunities for planning. As a result, many of these teachers volunteered to be part of this pilot year.

However, despite the in-depth conversation with coordinators about teachers being asked to participate in CTI, some teachers were assigned. In particular, one teacher found out the first day of school that he was part of the program. He was not only upset about finding out his teaching assignment in such a way, but he felt ill prepared since professional development had been offered in the summer. While the majority of other CTI content area teachers had summer months to revisit teaching methodologies and learning strategies, this teacher had no such preparation. Regardless, this teacher, who already possessed many of these skills, participated the first year, later requesting not to be part of the program. He felt overwhelmed and under supported since he had no knowledge of CTI. It was not that this teacher did not share in the beliefs of inclusion, it was not that this teacher experienced a negative collaboration in CTI, but rather he felt poorly treated by the coordinator. The foundational administrative support, which he looked for in the coordinator, which prompted the curriculum development and collaboration, was not present in this teacher's experience of CTI. After a year break, this teacher returned to CTI and became an exemplary teacher for the program.

### **CTI Partners**

Determining partners for the first year of CTI did not only center on volunteerism but also on availability. Restructuring from a pull out model to an inclusive model, special educators and the special education paraprofessionals could now become support partners in CTI classes. These participants fully embraced this opportunity without any

discussion. Other partners included the on-site PDS interns, which supported CTI English classes. Despite pulling these resources, more partners were needed for the pilot year. The Steering Committee requested an AmeriCorps volunteer to fill the needed partnerships. This became my first role in CTI.

As an AmeriCorps volunteer I partnered with various content area teachers in history and science. Being part of the PDS, which focused on collaboration, I entered comfortably into CTI partnerships. Learning content area curriculum was challenging but encouraged me to share literacy strategies I knew as a certified English teacher that allowed me as a learner to engage more with content area knowledge. Also, I worked one-on-one with a reading student who struggled with basic literacy skills.

### **Ongoing Professional Development**

In order to support CTI content area teachers with curriculum concerns as well as their partners with collaboration, ongoing professional development opportunities were offered throughout the pilot year. First, collaborative time to touch base with partners was encouraged. To reiterate the significance of collaboration an all day inservice in October provided CTI participants with various strategies focusing on collaborative teaching. Second, release time or extended contract time was offered six times during the school year. Third, CTI participants were invited to a luncheon mid-way through the year to discuss their experiences with other participants and the CTI Steering Committee. Fourth, participants were offered another opportunity to attend a conference called Extending Expertise on Exceptional Learners. Lastly, the year ended with a CTI celebration. Administration on the Steering Committee supported all needs expressed from all

participants be with collaboration or needed strategies to access curriculum. There never was hesitation when CTI participants asked for support.

### **Purpose of Study**

When I entered into this study, my initial desire was to share with the reader how a secondary inclusive initiative began, grew and was sustained over a ten-year period. However, through all the data collection, coding, discussion, and reflection another story/study or rather representative microcosm of CTI emerged. While recounting the critical happenings of this initiative, one collaborative partnership surfaced.

This collaboration formed seven years into the initiative. It was arranged. Both partners were very professional and shared a common goal of student success. Inservices had been attended. Collaborative meeting dates set. However, there was something that was just off. Slowly, things went from bad to worse. Being one of the partners in this collaboration, I was frustrated worried and concerned about the success of our students. This study focuses on the initial happenings and growth of this arranged collaborative partnership in a heterogeneous classroom.

### **Research Questions**

- How did my collaboration with Charles develop over time (process)?
- What strategies were helpful to my collaboration?
- What implications does our collaboration have for moving toward a secondary inclusive model?

**Summary**

CTI began due to a recognized student need. Creating heterogeneous classrooms, which included a content area teacher and partner, hoped to address the student needs.

This study is an up close look at one collaborative co-teaching experience in CTI.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Context of Case Study**

#### **Setting**

This study took place at a secondary high school located in central Pennsylvania between the school years of 1999/2000 and 2008/2009. This high school has approximately 215 teachers and approximately 2400 students in grades 9-12. Approximately 10% of the population receives special education services. The high school is located in a small rural town, which is centered around a major university. The high school partnered with the university during the time of this study through a Professional Development School program, which focuses on the certification of secondary English teachers through a one-year internship.

The high school is situated in two, rather old buildings. Since the population is large and the buildings dated, the majority of teachers share rooms. The South Building houses grades 9 and 10. The North Building houses grades 11 and 12. During passing periods, which would remind any passerby of a chaotic stampede, students travel from one building to the other based upon the location of classes. Almost all major content area classes for each respective grade are housed in the building of that grade level. The exception is mathematics due to the various levels offered.

The Biology classroom, which is the primary focus of this study, is a windowless classroom located in the South Building. One major perk is that this room is one of the few that has air-conditioning due to its lack of windows. This classroom holds up to 20 students comfortably. The classroom is set up with 10 moveable lab tables and four stationary sinks. Additionally three skylights provide some natural sunlight in the front

of the room. Both teacher desks are in the front of the room side-by-side separated only by a sink and backed by a blackboard. There is a back office that is shared with another content-area teacher. However, Charles, my co-teacher, has an office on the other side of the building.

During the time of this study, a separate principal guided each high school building. In addition, there were two additional vice principals per building. One associate principal of curriculum worked with both buildings.

### **Participants (aka Main Characters)**

#### **Denise (co-teacher, reading specialist, and author of study)**

I entered into teaching in 98/99 as a teacher intern placed in the high school in this study. Working collaboratively an entire school year with a primary mentor not only introduced me to curriculum but it also introduced me to the power of collaboration in a co-teaching setting. The next year I was not hired as a teacher but returned to be an AmeriCorps representative and to partner in CTI classrooms. The following year I was hired as an English teacher and reading specialist. During the time of this study I became a full-time reading specialist and a member of the CTI Steering Committee. Personally I love teaching in the English classroom but CTI has taught me that my strengths are in collaborative situations sharing the power of literacy skills.

**Charles (co-teacher)**

Charles is a biology teacher who dedicated his life to teaching after his military career ended due to a heart condition. When our collaboration began I believe he had been teaching for twelve years. He appears to be a stereotypical science teacher sporting glasses and a bowtie every day. Occasionally, Charles pulls out the Mr. Rodgers cardigan sweater, which simply adds to the stereotype and makes him more endearing. Charles is very knowledgeable and serious about his career and his manners are that of a true gentleman. Charles expects those same actions and dedication from his students. Standing well above six feet tall, Charles has a presence about him that encourages students to meet those expectations.

**Ashley (learning support teaching, part of CTI Steering Committee)**

Ashley has been a learning support teacher for well over twenty years. She is a petite woman with a warm smile. Ashley educates all she can on learning support issues but prefers not to do so in a large group presentation. This fact humors those who know her due to Ashley's volume control issues. Always an advocate for children, Ashley is seen by most of the school as the head of her department even though that position does not exist. Ashley is innovative, loving, passionate, and talkative. Ashley's inquiry into her student needs is what influenced the formation of CTI.

## **Classes**

The classes in this study, which are part of the Collaborative Teaching Initiative, are partial inclusion classes (not including all levels of special education at the school) in ninth and tenth grade with two classes from each of the four main content areas – science, English, history, and mathematics. During the first year of the Collaborative Teaching Initiative, a total of 16 classes participated. Staffed by 27 professionals and support staff. By the last year of the study, a total of 62 classes, grade nine through twelve, participated in the initiative, staffed by about 70 professionals and support staff. The content area classes involved changed and expanded throughout the course of this study.

From the beginning of the program, the goal of classroom composition was to create a heterogeneous population. During the first year of the program, a specified ratio was determined for CTI classes. Classes were capped at 18 and were comprised of six learning support students (identified), six reading support students, and six randomly selected students from the mainstream population. This ratio was revisited every year and many variables affected classroom composition. By the tenth year of this program, the goal for CTI classes was to cap class size at 20, which included five learning support students, two reading support students, and 13 randomly selected students from the mainstream population. The cap of 20 as well as the ratio just provided reflects the class composition of Charles' and my classroom during the time of this study.

## **Summary**

The collaboration examined in this study is comprised of a biology teacher I call “Charles” and myself. Our collaborative co-teaching experience took place in a heterogeneous classroom that included students with learning support, students with

reading support, and randomly selected students from the grade level population.

## **Chapter Three Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

This chapter will review literature related to the main topics of this case study: (1) defining collaboration (2) models of collaboration for co-teaching, (3) the process of co-teaching, (4) benefits of co-teaching and (5) struggles with co-teaching. First, defining collaboration and the multiple synonymous terms used in literature over the years is discussed. Following various models of collaboration for co-teaching are highlighted. Next, the process of collaboration during the task of co-teaching is explored. Finally, benefits and struggles of collaboration are reviewed. All topics play considerable roles in this case study on a collaboration within a secondary inclusive setting.

### **Defining Collaboration**

The complexity of defining collaboration is embedded in the numerous terms used in the literature over the years that are synonymous with the term collaboration. These terms include cooperative teaching, team teaching, co-teaching, teaming, peer coaching, and mentoring (Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989, cited in Ripley 1997; Hargreaves, 1994; Friend & Reising, 1993). In an attempt to clarify the definition of collaboration, Friend and Cook (2007) characterize the term collaboration more as “a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal” (p. 7). This style of interaction then must inform a specific method or action.

As just implied, because collaboration is a style of interaction it cannot exist in isolation. It can occur only when it is used by people who are engaged in a

specific process, task, or activity. ... what the term *collaboration* conveys is *how* the activity is occurring – that is, the nature of the interpersonal relationship occurring during the interaction and the ways in which individuals communicate with each other. (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 7)

For instance, two teachers could collaborate on lesson planning. Collaboration is the manner in which the two teachers are interacting to achieve a shared goal of lesson planning. Friend and Cook (2007) expand their definition of collaboration by acknowledging the needed characteristics for this style of interaction as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Defining Collaboration Based on Friend & Cook (2007)*

<b>Collaboration</b>
Voluntary
Requires parity among participants
Based on mutual goals
Shared responsibility for participation and decision making
Share resources
Shared accountability for outcomes

(Created from Friend & Cook, 2007, pp. 7-12).

One characteristic of collaboration is being voluntary. “Perhaps the best illustration of this notion is the current trend for schools to mandate that professionals collaborate in designing and implementing programs for students with special needs in general education classes” (Friend & Cook, 2007, p. 8). Despite mandates, there still exist those who do not collaborate but rather spend time complaining and this use of time takes from the time set aside for collaboration. Additionally, there are participants who

are willing to collaborate but openly admit they need support in order to meet the needs of all the students in the classroom. Being voluntary reaches well beyond simply having another person in the classroom.

Another characteristic of collaboration requires parity among participants. For instance, Friend and Cook provide an example of teachers in a teaming situation that need to engage in instructional planning. However, if one teacher believes that another teacher who is a member of the same team is not capable of instructional planning then the probability of parity existing is very low. One must acknowledge the expertise that each partner brings to a collaborative situation.

Additionally, collaboration needs to be based on mutual goals or even a mutual goal. One distinction that is important to realize with this characteristic is that there may be differences in opinion about other components of a situation. As long as participants involved put aside differences that are not essential then that goal can be achieved. Articulating the goal and keeping focused along with willingness and want to achieve the goal supports this characteristic.

Friend and Cook (2007) continue with the characteristic of shared responsibility. This characteristic is separated into two distinguishable parts. First, shared responsibility for participation is about tasks within the collaboration. Since partners bring their own expertise to each situation this does not mean that every task will emphasize each partner's expertise equally. Thus it is imperative to understand that responsibility for task completion will exist but will not necessarily be equal. The second component of this characteristic does involve equal participation and that is decision making. One partner should not take on the role or responsibility of decision making due to the fact that does

not embrace the meaning of collaboration. Moreover, the expertise of both partners is not being utilized to meet the shared goals.

Another characteristic of collaboration is the sharing of resources. As a person enters into collaboration, creating a shared goal, participating in task completion as well as decision making, one needs to share their resources in order to support the other characteristics. Resources may involve material supplies available to you as a professional but resources may also suggest other professionals you know that can be recommended as further support.

The last characteristic defined by Friend and Cook (2007) focuses on shared accountability for outcomes. Much like other characteristics previously mentioned, outcomes take on more than one meaning within a collaborative context. One meaning of outcome centers on organizing and preparing for experiences such as a presentation for peers. If in your planning, one aspect of the presentation such as who will bring the projector is overlooked all collaborators are held accountable for either a need to change the presentation or for a last minute rearranging to allow someone to retrieve the missing equipment. The second meaning of outcome centers on students. This meaning comes into play when there are situations such as co-teaching in heterogeneous classrooms. Part of collaboration is being able to ask and reflect on if collaboration is good for students.

As one reviews these characteristics of collaboration a pattern emerges. Relationships exist between the characteristics. For instance, in order to collaborate on shared decision making, one must embrace the parity of one's partner. I feel that the relationships that surface about collaborative characteristics reveal the depth and complexity of the partnership as well as the need for all the characteristics to be present

in order for collaboration to exist. The characteristics that define collaboration according to Friend & Cook (2007) focus on willingness to be involved in an interaction, feelings of equality, shared goals, being responsible, participation, and accountability.

Similar characteristics are mentioned throughout the literature but are referred to by other terms such as cooperative teaching.

Cooperative teaching was described in the late 1980s as an educational approach in which general and special educators work in co-active and coordinated fashion to jointly teach heterogeneous groups of students in educationally integrated settings...In cooperative teaching both general and special educators are simultaneously present in the general classroom, maintaining joint responsibilities for specified education instruction that is to occur within that setting. (Bauwens, Hourcade, & Friend, 1989, cited in Ripley, 1997, What is cooperative teaching?, para. 4)

Once again equality emerges as an important characteristic as well as shared responsibility for the activity that is occurring. Granted cooperative teaching as defined by Bauwens, Hourcade, and Friend (cited in Ripley, 1989) involves specific participants centered in the context of a heterogeneous classroom; however, there is a definite similarity in the characteristics that define both collaboration and cooperative teaching.

The synonymy expands to the use of the term co-teaching used by Murawski (2008).

Co-teaching exists when two professionals co-plan, co-instruct and co-assess a diverse group of students. Both teachers provide substantive instruction to all students on a daily, consistent basis. Neither is considered the main teacher of the

class; they are equals. (Murawski, 2008, Know What Co-teaching Is, para. 1)

Murawski focuses more distinctly on the shared or equal actions and responsibility of the participants. Furthermore, Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2008) define co-teaching in the following manner.

... co-teaching may be defined as two or more people who agree to do the following:

- (1) Coordinate their work to achieve at least on *common, publicly agreed-on goal*,
- (2) Share a *belief system* that supports the idea that each of the co-teaching team members has unique and needed expertise
- (3) Demonstrate *parity* by alternatively engaging in the dual roles of teacher and learner, expert and novice, giver and recipient of knowledge or skills
- (4) Use a *distributed functions theory of leadership* in which the task and relationship functions of the traditional lone teacher are distributed among all co-teaching team members
- (5) Use a *cooperative process* that includes face-to-face interaction, positive interdependence, interpersonal skills, monitoring co-teacher progress, and individual accountability

(p. 5).

Interestingly enough, many of these same characteristics such as having a shared belief system, common goals, parity, and accountability are those presented by Friend and Cook (2007) in their description of collaboration.

In reviewing the various terms used for collaboration and the characteristics associated with those, a definition has begun to emerge. Despite the term used in the

literature be collaboration, cooperative teaching, or co-teaching, there are common characteristics such as equality, responsibility, and accountability of the participants in the given setting. However, even with the commonalities of characteristics to create a basic definition there are questions in the literature about the pretense in which the style or act of collaboration is used, which can alter the definition of the act collaboration.

Hargreaves (1994) acknowledges the common use of the term collaboration and adds the term collegiality to the mix.

In the terms of specific initiatives alone, collaboration and collegiality can take the form of team teaching, collaborative planning, peer coaching, mentor relationships, professional dialogue and collaborative action research, to name a few. More informally, they can be expressed through staffroom talk, conversations outside the classroom, help and advice regarding resources and scores of other small but significant actions. (p. 188)

However, even though Hargreaves (1994) acknowledges the application of the common characteristics in given settings such as team teaching, he expands the definition by discussing the manner or willingness in which one enters into a given setting and the culture in which the activity is embedded. For instance, in a collaborative culture co-planning can happen organically among participants who value this style of interaction but in situations of contrived collegiality an outside influence such as an administrator is creating the setting and boundaries for co-planning as shown in Table 2. Hargreaves (1994) focuses on who controls the collaboration or collegiality (teacher or administrator) and how well that partnership is supported in order to discuss the various forms of both that can emerge. In addition, Hargreaves (1994) mentions that no pure form of either

truly exists but he does provide characteristics of each.

Table 2

*Collaborative vs. Contrived According to Hargreaves (1994)*

<b>Collaborative Cultures</b>	<b>Contrived Collegiality</b>
Spontaneous	Administratively regulated
Voluntary	Compulsory
Development-oriented	Implementation-oriented
Pervasive across time and space	Fixed in time and space
Unpredictable	Predictable

(Created from Hargreaves, 1994, pp. 192-198)

As mentioned previously, collaborative cultures are more organic in nature. Participants value working together and create their own purpose, which could be to co-plan a unit. There is no set structure for participants. There is also no set outcome and this more ambiguous, less retraining environment for collaboration leaves room to encourage teacher reflection and inquiry.

Unlike the organic nature of what Hargreaves (1994) calls a collaborative culture, a context of contrived collegiality institutes boundaries most often controlled by an administrator who also sets a purpose, time, and outcome for the participants. “Contrived collegiality is in these respects a safe administrative simulation of collaboration” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 196). Thus, the culture of a collaboration (e.g., co-teaching, cooperative teaching, teaming) can encourage the development of the relationship.

So how does one define such a complex term that appears so frequently in literature? First, common characteristics of collaboration taken from the literature are equality, responsibility, and accountability. Second, these characteristics apply to a style of interaction. Third, that interaction is referenced as being in a particular setting. Fourth, participants work toward a common interest or goal. Finally, that setting is

influenced by the pretense of the collaboration in the given culture. Thus the working definition of the term collaboration for this case study is as follows:

Collaboration is the manner in which two or more professionals interact within a given context and work toward a shared interest or common goal, which can be heavily influenced by the culture of the setting.

### **Models of Collaboration for Co-teaching**

“Most co-teaching occurs for students with mild disabilities, particularly learning disabilities, and it is most often a strategy of choice when a cluster of students with special needs exists in a particular grade level or class” (Friend & Reising, 1993, Who is Served, para. 1). Co-teaching involves not only understanding the meaning of collaboration but also then applying that type of interaction to a co-teach situation, which adds another level of complexity for many participants, which can include content area teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, and even student teachers.

One problem is that not all teachers or reading specialists have been prepared to function collaboratively. Such a change in the work-place requires extensive professional development for both teachers and specialists. By providing participants with models of how they can function and providing them with field experiences, you give them a better understanding of what is required. (Bean, 2001, p. 365)

Bean (2001) suggests what many recommend in the literature for participants in co-teaching situations and that is to provide models. Numerous co-teaching models have

been suggested (Friend & Reising, 1993; Lawton, 1999; Villa, Thousand, Nevin, & Liston, 2005).

One of the first models of collaborative teaching or co-teaching (Friend & Reising, 1993) suggests three possibilities of co-teaching:

- In some classes, the teachers take turns; one leads whole-class groups while the other observes students or quietly offers assistance to students.
- In others, teachers divide groups of students into heterogeneous groups and then create parallel instructional groups or classroom teaching stations.
- In yet others, the two teachers share an active role, jointly sharing a discussion, demonstrating a historical event through an impromptu skit, or modeling skills such as notetaking

(Friend & Reising, 1993, Classroom Structures, para. 1).

These first models although brief reflect qualities that have been highlighted in collaboration such as equality and responsibility.

Models of co-teaching continued to appear in literature during the 1990s.

“Jeanne Bauwens, an education professor at Boise State University and an authority on co-teaching, has identified three models of co-teaching that might be used during the course of a single period or day” (Lawton, 1999, p. 2)

1. *Complementary instruction approach* - the classroom teacher is primarily responsible for teaching content, while the special needs teacher focuses on providing the students with ‘how-to’ skills or strategies.
2. *Team teaching model* - one teacher delivers the curriculum content while

the other clarifies, paraphrases, adds information, or uses visual aids to try enhance understanding of a new concept.

3. *Supportive learning activities approach* - the special education teacher overseeing activities such as partner or group learning or peer tutoring, while the general educator delivers the curriculum

These particular models offer more detail with regards to the roles that a specialist might assume in a co-teach situation. Acknowledging the skills and expertise of a specialist, these suggested models have the content area teacher focusing primarily on curriculum instruction and the specialist focusing on skill instruction. Additionally, the team teaching variation suggests that a specialist could lead, which once again acknowledges the parity of the professionals.

Bean (2001) provides yet a more detailed model that categorizes variations of co-teaching, discusses advantages, disadvantages, and the location in which the variation would take place. This model expands the possibilities of roles that each teacher may assume. Additionally, the “Advantages” acknowledge the characteristics used to define collaboration and the “Potential Problems” suggest the possibility of collaborative tensions that may arise during a given variation of co-teaching.

Villa et al. (2005) elaborate on the collaboration model with a focus on secondary partnerships. The approaches include:

- (1) consultation, where support personnel provide advisement to the secondary educator
- (2) supportive co-teaching, where the secondary educator takes the lead role and support personnel rotate among students to provide support

(3) parallel co-teaching approach, where support personnel and the secondary educator instruct different heterogeneous groups of students

(4) complementary co-teaching, where support personnel do something to supplement or complement the instruction by the secondary educator (e.g., models not taking on a transparency, paraphrases the teacher's statements); and

(5) team teaching, where support personnel and secondary educator co-teach along side one another and share responsibility for planning, teaching, and assessing the progress of all students in the class

(pp. 42-43).

These variations reflect many of the models previously mentioned. Although, the last variation of "Team Teaching" is the only model that suggests shared responsibility. Perhaps this is an attempt to acknowledge that collaboration at the high school level needs to include more possibilities than just co-teaching due to the structure of high school as well as the many roles a specialist can play.

Roles in co-teaching can be filled by various participants including student teachers or teacher interns. Brown, Connors, Ennis, Gasior, Johnson, and Siers (2007) provide strategies to inform teacher interns on models of co-teaching. Below is a sampling from their *21 strategies in 21 minutes: Hands-on ideas for co-teaching in a PDS internship* (2007).

1. **Tag team-** each co-teacher takes responsibility for part of the lesson and they take turns with instruction (e.g., One may lead reading aloud, the other leads the discussion, or one shares answers to the homework and the other introduces a project)

2. **Grazing**- while one person is teaching, the other partner wanders around the room monitoring students' work and behavior
3. **Proximity**- the partners position themselves strategically to minimize disruption and maximize visibility that there are 2 adults in the room helping one another.
4. **Parallel Teaching**—teachers jointly plan instruction and each partner delivers the same lesson to half the class. This method allows more students to interact and receive more personal attention in the smaller group. Example: small group discussions, readings, reviewing...
5. **Eavesdropping**- the 2 adults whisper or discuss something aloud so students can overhear it (e.g., “Let’s have a quiz on Thursday”)

(Brown et al., 2007).

These variations provide descriptions of the models and leave room for who will assume which role. Furthermore, examples accompany some descriptions providing scaffolding for the reader to better comprehend the model. Once again these suggested models embed characteristics of collaboration such as shared responsibility and equality.

Literature focusing on models of collaboration is vast. This is a brief sampling of models available. Each variation reflects certain characteristics of collaboration that can support a co-teach situation. Nevertheless, participants still struggle with how to implement these models in their co-teaching situations.

## The Process of Co-Teaching

In an ideal world, you and your partner complement each other beautifully. You have the same goals and visions for your classroom and your students, you have complementary strengths and weaknesses, you have similar philosophies on classroom management, and similar commitment levels to the class and the students. In the real world, you may not even meet your co-teacher until the first days before the school year (if one of you is new to the school), and upon meeting him/her, your inner alarm might be going off. “How can I work with this person?” you may ask yourself. “S/he does X/Y/Z differently, and I don’t even like...” (Zelkowitz, 2009, para. 2)

Co-teaching has been compared to a marriage, arranged marriage, and even a courtship (Murawski, 2008; Howard & Potts, 2009; Zelkowitz, 2009; Hartwig, 2010). Despite models of co-teaching offered to participants many struggle with the process of becoming partners in the classroom. Part of that process is personal with regards to how a participant enters into a relationship. Friend & Cook (2007) suggest that certain prerequisites facilitate the forming of a professional relationship such as trust (Friend & Cook, 2007, pp. 12-15). Additionally, Zelkowitz (2009) blogs about her suggestions to help guide a co-teaching relationship:

- Always treat your co-teacher with respect
- Determine an equitable allocation of responsibilities
- Make respectful use of each other’s time
- Keep the lines of communication open
- Accept responsibility for your actions

- Don't be afraid to see "outside counseling." (para. 3).

As with any relationship, respect, trust, responsibly, communication are all characteristics to consider. Additionally, one must realize that there will be tensions and successes during the partnership. Communication about these critical happenings must occur to strengthen the relationship and create potential for professional development.

It is imperative that two teachers working in the same classroom have ongoing dialog about what bugs them, their pet peeves, the good parts, the tough parts, the struggles and the victories. Communication needs to be open, honest, confidential, and continuous. There is no substitute for daily, sometimes gut-wrenching and cathartic, yet cleansing and growth-causing communication.

(Kohler-Evans, 2006, p. 263).

Communication is essential in a co-teaching situation. Partners need to touch base about students, lesson planning, etc. "A co-teaching pair can build the foundation of their 'marriage' through discussing the potential and real difficulties posed by their situation and by co-planning instruction" (Howard & Potts, 2009, p. 3). Part of the process is finding time, asking for time, or simply making time to allow these discussions to occur.

Co-planning will be a test for any relationship. The literature suggests that a co-teaching template or co-planning components are followed (Murawski & Dieker, 2004; Howard & Potts, 2009) to scaffold not only the communication between partners but also to create a routine and even some efficiency while keeping in mind all students' needs. Howard and Potts (2009) discuss lesson planning as being delicate.

"... both parties need to be equally invested and have equal status in the classroom. The only way to do this is to, jointly, explicitly plan out and address

the following lesson components:

- Standards
- Assessment
- Accommodations / Modifications
- Instructional Strategies
- Logistics (p. 3).

Howard & Potts (2009) provide detailed description for each lesson component listed above and include the participation of each partner equally. Murawski & Dieker (2004) also suggest to “begin planning sessions by discussing what will be taught (content objectives) and how it will be taught (coteaching approaches or adaptations/modifications)” (Murawski & Dieker, 2004, p. 56). What is not as prevalent in the literature is a discussion on who leads the co-planning and how that may affect the relationship. For instance, if a new specialist enters into a co-teaching situation with a history teacher how much can that specialist contribute to a discussion on the standards? “Parity between educators is critical in establishing a shared classroom. If one teacher feels it is her classroom of that the students are hers, that teacher is less likely to be willing to share ownership, planning, instruction, and assessing” (Murawski, 2009, p. 30). If partners choose to follow lesson plan components such as those provided by Howard and Potts (2009) it is critical to finish the suggested plan so both partners share their expertise be either in content or access/skill.

At the core of coteaching is determining what instructional techniques will be most efficient and effective in helping all students meet those standards. One of the major benefits of co-teaching is that teachers bring different areas of expertise.

These diverse skills are helpful during the planning stage, as both educators can find ways to use their strengths to ensure that the lesson is appropriately differentiated for a heterogeneous class. (Murawski & Dieker, 2004, p. 55)

Co-planning is an activity that reflects co-teachers' abilities to trust one another, communication with each other, to respect their work, and to be responsible for their roles in the partnership. "As part of the regular planning process, co-teachers need to self-reflect upon how the co-teaching relationship is working and evaluate how specific strategies are working ... These meetings are necessary for the ongoing health of the co-teaching marriage" (Howard & Potts, 2009, p. 6).

### **Benefits of Co-Teaching**

In 1993, Friend and Reising listed the rationale for co-teaching efforts:

- (a) to provide students with a more individualized and diversified learning experience and
- (b) to enable teachers to complement each other's expertise while providing a mutual professional support system.

(Friend & Reising, 1993, *The Development of Co-teaching*, para. 4)

This rationale reflects some benefits for students as well as teachers involved in a co-teaching environment. However, the literature expands upon these two corner stones of co-teaching efforts.

#### Student Benefits

1. Teachers report that students in their co-taught classes perceive that someone is always available to assist them and that everyone receives

special help. (Friend & Reising, 1993, Conclusion, para. 1)

2. Five major benefits were identified for most students in the co-taught classrooms: improved academic performance, more time with and attention from the teacher, increased emphasis on cognitive strategies and study skills, increased emphasis on social skills, and improved classroom communities. (Walther-Thomas, 1997, p. 400)
3. Ripley's (1997) research study found that in schools where collaborative teaching has been practiced, student benefits for both students with special educational needs and their typical peers were reported. (Results, para. 4)
4. These teachers help one another by providing different areas of expertise that, when fused together correctly, can result in enhanced instruction for all students. (Murawski & Dieker, 2004, pp. 52-53)

#### Teacher Benefits

1. Teachers also share that they experience a sense of professional renewal when they co-teach (Friend & Reising, 1993, Conclusion, para. 1).
2. Research evidence also suggests that the confidence that comes with collegial sharing and support leads to greater readiness to experiment and take risks, and with it a commitment to continuous improvement among teachers as a recognized part of their professional obligation (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 186).
3. Further more, staff reported professional growth, personal support, and enhanced teaching motivation. Collaboration brought complementary

professional skills to planning, preparation, and delivery of classroom instruction (Ripley, 1997, Results, para. 4).

4. Lawton (1999) also reported, according to qualitative research that the benefits of co-teaching. “Teachers can obtain personal and professional support by working closely with a colleague and by their exposure to a wider range of students. Special education teachers can also get a better sense of how their students are faring in regular classrooms” (Lawton, 1999, p. 2).
5. It comes with its challenges, but it also offers a great opportunity for constant feedback on your teaching, daily chances to watch another skilled teacher at work, and automatic support for the bad days and props for the good! (Zelkowitz, 2009, para. 10)

The benefits of collaboration in educational settings are supported through various studies in the literature, some of which are listed above. Additionally, teacher benefits in a co-teaching setting such as increased motivation, professional renewal, and enhance support, must influence student benefits. Student benefits range from academic performance to how they feel within the classroom community. Benefits of co-teaching reach from teachers to the students involved in the experience but despite all the positives reported, struggles remain.

## **Struggles with Co-Teaching**

Although positive reports of collaboration and co-teaching exist in the literature, there are also indications of struggles. Many of these struggles relate back to the characteristics of collaboration such as parity, mutual goals, shared responsibility, etc. Friend and Reising (1993) report tensions between collaborators and the parity of their relationship.

First, in some co-taught classes the fundamental classroom structure, instructional format, and leadership do not change. That is, the classroom teacher may assume that the special educator's presence should not have any impact on the class.

Second, in such situations, the special education teacher typically functions more like a paraprofessional or student teacher in the class. Problems such as these may be the result of too little planning prior to co-teaching. They may also occur because of a sense of losing instructional control. (Classroom Structures, para. 2)

The sense of losing control extends into role shifts that specialist experience. McLesky and Waldron (1996) state that teachers of students with disabilities are not always the strongest supporters of inclusive programs due to their severe role change in the school setting.

Teachers of students with disabilities must make the greatest changes in their professional roles if inclusive programs are to succeed. These teachers must give up their classrooms, give up their separate curricula, negotiate roles with several classroom teachers, face the possibility that they will be relegated to the role of instructional assistants in the general education classroom, learn the curricula and classroom routines of other teachers, and make a variety of other changes.

(McLeskey & Waldron, 1996, p. 155)

Furthermore, Keefe and Moore (2004) not only describe the change of role for a special education teacher but feel that lack of content knowledge restrains or rather limits a special education teacher's new role as a partner in content area classrooms.

Another struggle of co-teaching is time (Walther-Thomas, 1997; Dieker & Murawski, 2003; Murawski, 2008). "Even if teachers are prepared to work together, the dilemma that often occurs is a lack of time to adequately discuss and plan for the instructional, behavioral and logistical needs of the class" (Dieker & Murawski, 2003, Content Issues, para. 4). Time is required for co-teaching relationships to develop and to allow partners to co-plan in order to benefits to result. Additionally, time at the secondary level is required to introduce special educators to content area knowledge. "Content issues that impact co-teaching at the secondary level include a) teacher preparation, b) lack of adequate planning time, and c) the need for mastery of all content areas by special educators" (Dieker & Murawski, 2003, Content Issues, para. 1). Thus time is a significant concern as it pertains to all aspects of co-teaching.

Lastly, the need for ongoing professional development is a struggle for various participants. "Liston (2004, cited in Worrell, 2008, p.45) conducted interviews with secondary general and special educators regarding co-teaching relationships. The analysis of the interviews showed a need for on-going professional development regarding inclusive and special education issues." Much like the time needed for specialists to gain content knowledge, a need exists to provide non-specialists with workshops or inservices discussing special education issues. All participants require time and professional development to better understand their new roles in the co-teaching environment.

## **Summary**

Co-teaching involves all the topics covered in this literature review. First, defining collaboration is a fundamental building block that provides an understanding of needed characteristics for partnerships. Second, reviewing models of collaboration present teachers or rather any participants with a visual of what co-teaching may look like in a classroom prior or during their experience. Third, the process of collaboration is compared to that of a marriage due to the complexities as well as depths of interactions needed. The process challenges an individual and will be explored more in this study. Finally, once in a co-teaching situation benefits as well as struggles become visible to all involved. Co-teaching has become a new way to provide services to all students as well as a manner to offer daily professional development to those involved in partnerships.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Methodology and Analysis**

#### **Methodology**

This study used a qualitative methodology to examine a co-teaching collaboration in a secondary inclusion program. This study used a case study with an autoethnographic approach. “A case study is an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ ... over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61). “Autoethnography is a qualitative research method that utilizes data about self and its context to gain an understanding of the connectivity between self and others within the same context” (Ngunjiri, Hernandez, & Chang, 2010, p. 2). By using case study as well as autoethnographic approaches I hope to immerse the reader into an experience of the process of co-teaching through details from numerous artifacts including journals, observations, surveys, and personal narrative, which were gathered and some created as part of my role on the Collaborative Teaching Initiative Steering Committee (see Appendix A).

The lived experiences I share about the co-teaching process are presented through personal narrative. Story provokes the reader to interact with a writer and to make connections, to ask questions, to reflect on their own experiences in the social world. As writer/researcher I share a lived experience exposing my emotional, physical, and philosophical process of collaboration in a co-teaching setting. Although this study is nongeneralizable, I hope it provides some insight to my readers into a collaborative journey of developing a co-teaching partnership in an inclusion program.

### **Autoethnographic Approach**

Before I discuss an autoethnographic approach to qualitative research, I want to briefly mention ethnography due to the obvious origins of the former. “An ethnography is a description and an interpretation of a cultural or social group or system” (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). According to Creswell (1998) the researcher observes participants and these given groups attempting to make meaning out of their interactions. This meaning making of other’s interactions is a primary difference between ethnography and autoethnography.

The essential difference between ethnography and autoethnography is that in an autoethnography, the researcher is not trying to become an insider in the research setting. He or she, in fact, is the insider. The context is his or her own. (Duncan, 2004, p. 3)

The autoethnographic approach seeks to make connections between the researcher, their personal experiences, and others by inviting the reader in with the use of personal story. “Because autoethnography revolves around the exploration of self in relation to other and the space created between them, disciplines like education are ripe grounds for autoethnographic study because a social construction of knowledge, identity and culture is inherent” (Starr, 2010, p. 4). I believe that co-teaching is an aspect of educational practice that creates an ideal setting for autoethnography due to the potential of socially constructed knowledge between collaborators, possible role changes that can affect identity, and cultural transform from isolation to collaboration. This study explores the process of my experiences and others within a co-teaching experience as part of an inclusive program.

## Case Study

Case study is considered by some to be a strategy that focuses on happenings of groups or organizations (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Conversely, a case study is considered by others to be more “a genre for *reporting* than as a strategy for *conducting* research” (Wolcott, 2009, p. 85). Thinking about genre, one might consider walking into a video store and going to the romance section. All the movies such as *Romeo & Juliet*, *Never Been Kissed*, or *The Notebook* are considered romance movies but they are told in very different ways. One is a tragedy, one is a comedy, and one weaves a story of past and present. In considering this notion of genre, I embraced the idea of that the “bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied – a program, an event, an activity, or individuals” (Creswell, 1998, p. 61) but have chosen to use an autoethnographic approach to share my experience of collaboration within a co-teach setting over a two year time period through narrative.

## My Role

My role as researcher in this study is one of great depth and breadth due to my ongoing role in the Collaborative Teaching Initiative since its inception in 1999/2000 as well as my previous role as intern in the university’s Professional Development School (PDS) in 1998/1999. I must acknowledge my internship with the PDS due to the fact that the PDS is where I first experienced teaching through collaborative experiences. Additionally, I also learned about critical incidents, teacher inquiry, and the power of reflection. However, when rereading what I wrote about these experiences for graduate classes I feel that I omitted a great deal of information. I discussed literacy and discourse

through the theories of major contributors to the literature but I missed who I was in these experiences. For instance, I wrote about becoming part of a discourse through behaviors and actions; however, I never shared my emotional experience that made me ponder my role within the school's discourse of English teachers. I felt the reader never truly could have understood my data since I did not include myself.

This study is about my experiences in a co-teaching situation and for the reader to understand the data to its fullest intent I must share my foundations of becoming an educator as well as a member of CTI. Throughout the ten years of this study, my role in CTI changed from that of support partner, to lead classroom teacher, to steering committee member, and to professional development leader. As my role in CTI has changed over the years I have found myself asking "So now what will I see or experience to better understand this initiative?" I am curious, love learning, enjoy being with people, and, being the youngest of seven, I am a born observer. Additionally, growing up in an Italian family, I believe, has encouraged me to be more emotionally expressive than the average person. I feel sharing experiences, discussing them, and thinking about those experiences, influence my own person growth. As much as I appreciate this process, there is a certain amount of vulnerability attached to autoethnographies. I struggled with this element of this approach. Keeping in mind as a researcher that my participation within this studied discourse will continue I made some choices about what artifacts to not include in this study. My membership in this discourse is based on trust and as a researcher I needed to respect that about myself as a participant as well as the other members involved in CTI. Being involved in so many aspects of CTI, I acknowledge the perspective I have as well as the perspective I have never experienced as being the only

teacher in the room. I recognize the only culture I have known as a teacher is a culture of collaboration. Although, only knowing collaboration in every day of my professional life, I view this text as a discussion even as a collaboration between the reader and me and our lived experiences.

### **Analysis**

Autoethnographic accounts do not consist solely of the researcher's opinions but are also supported by other data that can confirm or triangulate those opinions. Methods of collecting data include participant observation, reflective writing, interviewing, and gathering documents and artifacts. (Duncan, 2004, p. 5)

This process began before I ever really knew what I was doing was an autoethnographic approach to qualitative research. In fact, this process began before I truly identified my dissertation topic. This happened in two ways. First, being the historian for CTI, I have collected and created artifacts since the beginning of the initiative. Everything I have saved, collected from others, or created as a reflection I feel represent a time, place, and experience that represents the growth of CTI. I cannot disregard anything. In fact, over the years I have had to add more file cabinets to a classroom I share with two other teachers. Fortunately they understand this somewhat hoarding nature of my position. Additionally, the other people who understand my role are our technology support professionals who continually need to expand my server space due to pictures, journals, iMovies, PowerPoints, etc. Secondly, for the past couple of

years, my co-teacher “Charles,” the Director of Special Education in our district, and “Ashley” have been invited to speak at our local university about our experiences in CTI.

During these chats on campus, Charles openly speaks about his hesitations and celebrations of our collaboration. While Charles shares I always have the same conversation with myself. *How much can I truly share? Our collaboration is going so well? Do I share the fact that I thought I needed to prove my intelligence? Or how difficult it was for me to learn some of the content? How will Charles react? I want to be truthful but what would be taking it too far? Is there a too far? I want to always be professional.* While thinking such things I always have butterflies in my stomach but a big smile on my face. However, every year I gain a little more courage about the security of our partnership and I share a little more. These sessions are somewhat therapeutic to us all. As we are walking to our cars at the end of the evening, we always discuss how much we enjoy sharing our experiences as well as how much we as professionals gain from such reflective talk. Thus my role as CTI historian/data collector and yearly events such as mentioned above truly designate the beginnings of my autoethnographic approach to qualitative research.

As I began to explore my case study I relied on what I had learned about qualitative research and decided to start by sorting. Since I already had ten years worth of data I began by putting all of my files into crates to be taken to my parents’ summer home in order to begin sorting. At the time of this sorting I was unable to walk much due to a back injury so my parents offered me a space in their home to work as well as their services as babysitters. Granted the injury made me extremely uncomfortable but it made me sit in one place for long periods of time. So I began looking through crate after crate.

My first time through was like a walk down memory lane. I smiled, I laughed, and I even cried as I uncovered student artifacts I had long forgotten about. After days, I had finished my first read through and I just sat in the little room that had become my office, looking out at the mountains while the sun shined in the windows, smiling. I had that feeling you get when after watching an inspirational teacher movie like *Dead Poets Society*. There was a magic in these artifacts but that was a magic that emerged due to my experiences. I knew I had to dig deeper for my future reader.

Still not able to move much, I returned to the little room and began a second read through. This time, I made sure to place all the files in chronological order and I began to take notes to outline major happenings for each year. Once again I found enjoyment in reliving the moments highlighted by the artifacts. These artifacts included numerous memos, emails, meeting minutes, surveys, articles, conference presentations, workshops, program evaluations, grades, personal journals, and an audio recording. In analyzing these artifacts in chronological order, from earliest to latest, various patterns emerged.

The first pattern that surfaced was due to the nature or rather structure of the school year. This pattern would be familiar to any teacher. Every school year brings similar events or activities for those involved in school such as professional development in September or scheduling at the end of the year. I knew that this was not the end of my sorting or coding. I knew personally that much more meaning had yet to emerge from this data. This expected or typical pattern I acknowledged but as I read, reread, reflected and wrote about many of the documents more significant happenings in the program became apparent.

The second pattern emerged beyond the scope of a single school year. I began to look at major happenings or shifts in the program over the entire ten-year span of this case study. Major events included the first year of the program, the expanding of the program, recognizing a new student need, etc. These events, although significant, seemed to lack what I was experiencing personally as I reviewed the data. An energy or excitement was missing even though these significant events I feel helped the program evolve. The data contained yet another pattern.

By this time, I had left my sunshine-filled little room and returned to work as the school year began. My reflecting, coding, and writing now happened after school in the classroom I shared with two other lovely ladies. At the end of each day and during the weekends I would unpack another crate searching for themes I missed or hoping for something to trigger a memory that would help me uncover another pattern. Finally, after discussion with my committee chair, the third pattern came to light. That pattern reflected commonalities of all significant happenings of the program – (1) administrative support, (2) curriculum development, and (3) collaboration. As I began to write about these themes and reference data such as old journals and emails one collaborative co-teaching experience surfaced repeatedly.

Finally, I wrote a narrative capturing my experiences in this particular co-teaching experience. When I wrote about this specific experience the words flowed through my fingertips. I relived many of our critical moments together and experienced yet another emotional journey. Furthermore, I had kept a recording, an audio recording, of how my partner expressed his experience during this co-teaching experience and added that data to my narrative. Many pieces of data such as the recording and email correspondences

expanded my personal narrative to reflect our process of collaboration within the setting of an inclusive program over a two year time period. After meeting with my committee this co-teaching experience became the focus of my writing. Finally, after all of the sorting, coding, discussing, and writing I realized what I had not acknowledged as data during this entire process – my own experiences.

## **Chapter Five Collaboration**

### **Setting the Scene – Participants Defining Collaboration in CTI**

The most frequently asked question by CTI participants over the past ten years has been, “What is my role?” For these collaborative roles were unlike any CTI participants had personally experienced in their own history of school. Without any personal experience to acknowledge, these new roles lacked context.

Any social system consists of specific social roles and accepted expectations of those filling these roles. Roles are familiar to everyone who has studied or worked in schools and pose no mystery. One need only say teacher, principal, counselor, student, community, or parent to evoke images about the behaviors, beliefs, and relative power position of each person who is labeled by role. (Hart & Bredeson, 1996, p. 65)

However, this professional, collaborative role does not have a definition. “One does not act with another person according to a uniform, universal script,” (Starratt, 1994, p. 35). Instructions on how to work with another person professionally in a classroom of teenagers do not exist. While some may long for specifics on his or her role in the classroom as a CTI partner, we have learned that it is through the process of forming a relationship through which a personalized definition of collaboration emerges. CTI participants actively defined collaboration through their various relationships and experiences.

For some collaboration meant creating a learning environment through the synergy of the partnership:

To me collaboration is the mixing of experiences and expertise of two professionals in order to create a learning environment, which meets each student's educational needs. Each person brings something to the table and in most cases these attributes enhance the ability of both teachers. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

This particular content area teacher positively embraced the qualities and characteristics that each professional brought to the classroom. The goal was to meet the educational needs of each student in that classroom. Collaboration created an atmosphere, an environment, for learning and for the betterment of all the learners in the classroom, including the teachers.

In another example, collaboration was dependant on the partner's professional qualification. This teacher felt that different levels of qualification would produce different types of collaboration. Collaboration meant the method in which the curriculum was delivered:

It depends on the partnership. Two equally qualified teachers in a collaborative partnership can plan and deliver a curriculum that is "twice" as good as one stand-alone teacher can. A teacher partnered with a new teaching intern may or may not get the assistance and input in planning or executing a lesson. A teacher partnered with a paraprofessional may be able to establish a working relationship, which uses the paraprofessional as either a clerical aide, a tutor to a select few students, or a co-teacher for the whole class. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

This teacher acknowledged particular differences in partnering with various levels of professionals. The differences focus on the ability of the lead teacher to implement a variety of methods to delivering the curriculum. Despite the focus being on methodology,

once again the content area teacher recognized that different partners bring different skills and background knowledge to the classroom.

In yet another example of how a teacher defines collaboration, the definition centers on the development of ideas. These ideas are a result of the communication in the relationship:

Collaboration to me is the development of ideas by listening to others. One can have many great ideas, but these ideas can be made better by listening to suggestions or variations presented by others. Regardless of who the individual is or what his or her profession is, individuals have a way of thinking unto themselves. The key to collaboration is to understand that and see ideas from another perspective. Without doing this, a barrier will be setup around one's self that no one, be it students or family, could ever break through. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

The value of communication and perspective emerge in this teacher's definition of collaboration. There is the recognition that simply having another person in the classroom is valuable, regardless of that person's professional position. In addition, there is awareness of the professional dangers of isolation. Furthermore, this teacher also mentions that each individual brings different experiences with them, which seems to have emerged as a theme of collaboration from the examples above.

Collaboration is a defined, flexible process unique to the relationships of those involved. As mentioned in above narratives, collaboration can be about (1) creating a learning environment (2) using a certain methodology or (3) recognizing the potential of a partner. These various definitions are all based on the diverse professional partnerships or relationships that these participants have experienced over the years. All are different

but all are defining collaboration based upon the process of forming a relationship through CTI. Defining roles and areas of strengths helped CTI partners begin the process of defining collaboration best suited to their situation.

Through the various examples and activities offered during the CTI inservice, such as completing and sharing a worksheet titled “What Makes You Tick, What Ticks You Off” (see Appendix B), CTI partners discussed the fundamentals of classroom management and teaching philosophy. The initial time and space provided for the partners to begin to form their relationship was critical in defining their roles in the CTI classroom.

The strength to be oneself can only be fully gained in relationships to other human beings. In authentic relationships, others give us the courage to be ourselves. Here we have the paradox of autonomy. One cannot be autonomous in isolation. Striving to be totally oneself by oneself reveals one’s incompleteness, one’s poverty, one’s essential loneliness. One makes contact with ‘reality’, with the rich world of meaning, by reaching out beyond the isolated self. (Starratt, 1994, p. 33)

Reaching beyond the comfort of isolation is disruptive. However, through the tensions of discomfort and the encouragement to discuss CTI relationships many partnerships have resulted in the realization that there is a richness, a benefit to sharing your space, your time, your thoughts, and your students.

By recognizing a traditional school boundary of isolation, the benefits of participating in CTI emerge. One such benefit recognized by a CTI participant is reflective practice:

Teachers are very territorial by nature, and the CTI experience breaks that down.

I gained pre- and post- lesson feedback to be able to better reflect on how effective the lesson(s) were. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

The physical structure and pace of a teacher's day allows for little more than a bathroom break here and there; however, having another adult in the classroom allows for feedback. How often do teachers question if their lesson plans are going to work with a particular class? Or if a particular class really understood what a teacher just covered? Having another adult in the classroom allows for a teacher to stop and communicate with another adult about what they, as teachers, just experienced and observed in the classroom.

Another CTI participant acknowledged his or her awareness of new methodology as a benefit of the program due to the professional development component of the initiative.

I think the main thing I gained through CTI was new ways of presenting information.

Using activities that use the students' strengths to demonstrate what they have learned. Also, giving up a little bit of structure for the use of more creative lessons.

Focusing on the students needs when planning new lessons. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

Professional development is a significant component of CTI. Providing teachers with continuous professional development which include literacy strategies and researched-based programs also provides teachers with support. Throughout the various professional development opportunities, CTI stresses that teaching heterogeneous populations is teaching what is good *for* all students *to* all students.

Some teachers recognize the benefit of communication as well as its potential. Communication about pedagogy, about methodology, and about students allows for the disruption of the traditional isolation of one teacher in one classroom with the door closed. However, opening the doors of communication creates a potential of growth that typically would be absent with a traditional model of school.

CTI can take many different forms, but the one that I have experienced is best described by saying it has challenged my pedagogy and helped me grow as a teacher more than if I would not have been in the program... CTI has made me less protective of my stuff by sharing with colleagues and allowed me to ask others for help or ideas. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

And as for my development as a person, I have learned to open my ears and eyes to the rest of the world (a goal that I try to teach all high school students everyday). My ability to communicate to students and professionals in and out of the classroom has helped me develop a rapport and reputation that most teachers wish for. These irreplaceable lessons that I have been taught will forever remain with me and grow as I continue my efforts to make connections with students and professionals in the field of education. (CTI Content Area Teacher)

The process, the relationships, the existing bumps and the struggles, as well as the questions of collaboration have allowed these teachers to change and to grow as professionals. Just as one definition alone cannot describe collaboration, the benefits of this process for participants are also unique and personal.

## **My Collaborative Experiences in CTI**

During the ten years of this study, I have been a CTI partner with four Earth System Science teachers, four English teachers, two Biology teachers, and eight World History teachers. My partnerships lasted anywhere from a few months to four years. Reflecting on these various experiences with regard to the length of the relationship as well as the nature of the relationship, I began to detect a personal pattern within my collaborations.

Most of my CTI partnerships over this ten-year case study began at the start of the school year. This allowed for some professional development before the first day of school with students. This professional development consisted of an overview of CTI and then time to get to know your partner's expectation in the classroom. For me, this time was almost like a first date: you are very polite, nervous, self-conscious, and you are hoping that your partner not only likes you but that you like them.

However, not all of my partnerships began before the start of school and this made the situation even more challenging for me because I was entering into a classroom community already developed and formed. In this situation, I not only worried about how the content area teacher perceived me but also the perception of the students who had already formed relationships. I worried about perception. I never wanted the teacher to think I was coming into his/her classroom because he needed support or lacked some skill as a teacher. In addition, I never wanted students to perceive me as another adult coming into the classroom because they were out of control. These partnerships challenged me the most as a collaborator. Returning to my first date metaphor, this situation was not only like a first date, but it was like a first date with kids along.

To aid in developing a trusting partnership, I often enter into a CTI partnership by simply watching and listening. I try not to be too big of a presence in the classroom, because I want to be respectful of my partner's practice. We are just beginning to form a relationship, and this quiet introduction seemed a great way to get to know your partner. I observe the students, the teacher, the interactions, and the tensions. I try to get a feel for the type of community that the content area teacher is trying to develop. During this time, which can last for a day to a few weeks, I think of how my strengths as a partner can add positively to the classroom community.

As I begin to become part of the classroom community, my role as CTI partner expands to that of classroom aid. I help pass out papers, take attendance, communicate with students' support teachers, email lesson plans, and help with classroom management. During these activities not only do I support the teacher and students but also we begin to form a relationship. I perceive this as a continuation of the getting to know you stage. This stage for some partnerships is a stepping-stone; however, for other partnerships this is the gist of the relationship. Some content area teachers only want this level of support. Pushing for more can ruin the potential of this relationship ever becoming more in the future. As a partner, it is imperative for me to be able to read the teacher's needs, wants, and trust level. Being a skillful communicator is a must for a successful partnership. Revisiting the dating metaphor, this situation would be realizing that you and your partner are just going to be friends. Remember that sometimes the most meaningful relationships start off as just being friends.

As the closeness of the relationship develops, typically with the duration of time together, my role grows to include some curriculum conversations. I have found that

discussing content is a more comfortable conversation to start with and allows me to acknowledge my partner as the content expert. These discussions often lend themselves to literacy conversations since literacy skills are what allow students to share their understanding of content. This is a fine dance and when I start to share my literacy expertise with my partner. If I am placed with a content area for a year, I typically find our partnership reaching this stage.

Considering variables such as teacher need and trust, I am able some years, to development a partnership that allows for review of assessments and reflection. Once again, this is a touchy area for some teachers. For some, they feel as if a discussion about an assessment is a discussion about their abilities as a professional. However, it is imperative to discuss the data concerning student understanding, development, and growth.

In my personal experiences with CTI partnerships, I feel that if a partnership is going well the first year then it is within the second year that major developments are accomplished (shown in Figure 1). During this time, I find more reflection on methodologies, more professional readings are shared and discussed, more literacy practices used in the given content area, and more student engagement is observable. Returning to the dating metaphor, this second year feels more like a marriage. You know your partner, you trust your partner, and you view each other more like co-teachers.

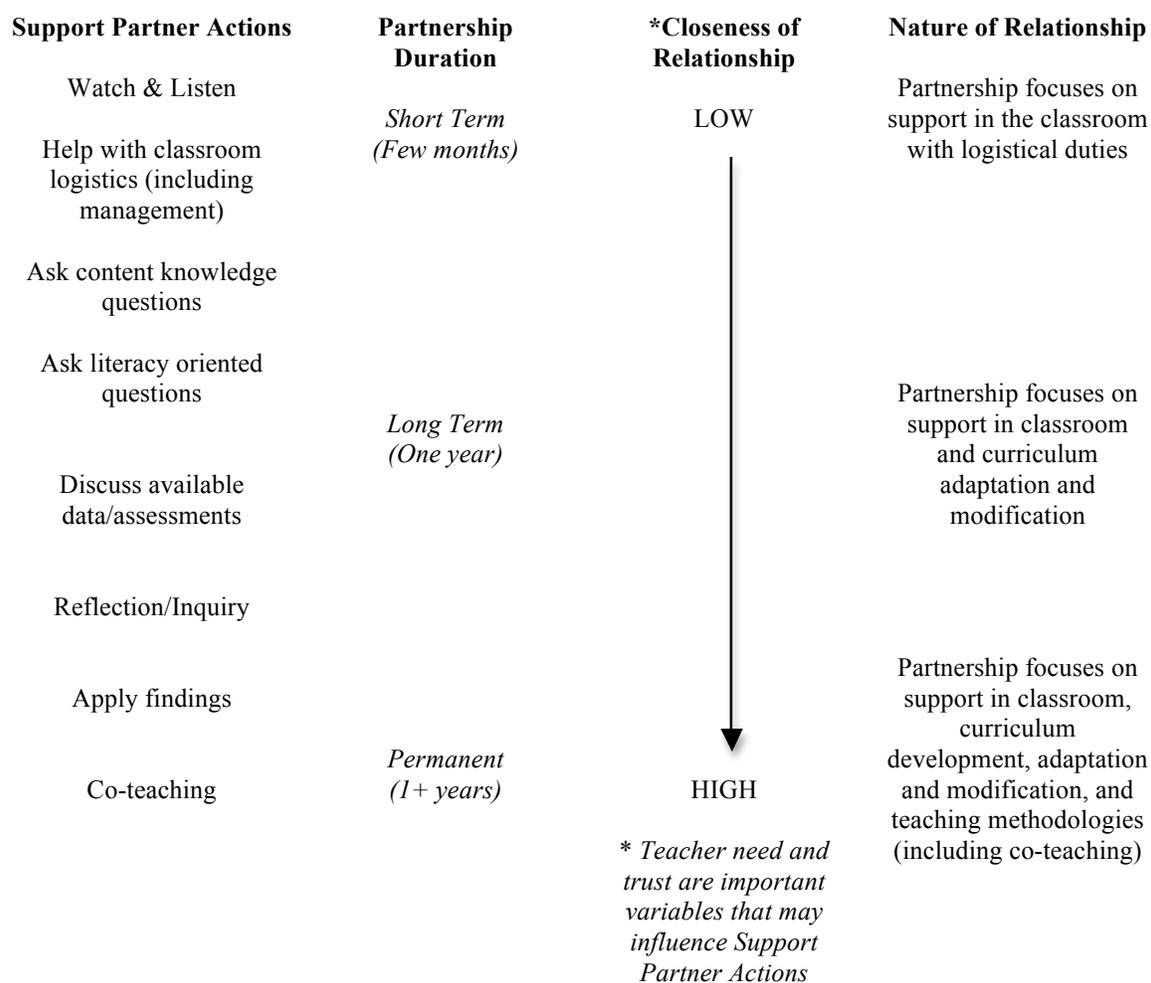


Figure 1 Patterns in My Collaborative Relationships

Inspired by *Types of collaborative relationships* [chart] (2010).

### The Blind Date

One partnership that I believe is an example of a CTI success is my partnership with Biology teacher Charles. This partnership began in the 2006/2007 school year, and if you would have told me then that I would be referring to this partnership as a success, I would have laughed. Prior to becoming Charles's partner, I knew him only through a few short interactions regarding assessments that were tension filled. Charles did not hide his dislike of CTI, which irritated me to the core.

Aware of Charles's negative attitude toward CTI, members of the Steering Committee asked me how I felt about being his CTI partner for the upcoming school year. At the time, I cringed inside but I knew that this would be a critical opportunity to expose Charles to what CTI could mean to a content area teacher. I reminded myself of the journey one must take to become a member of a given discourse. Regardless of my optimistic aspirations, I truly had no plan on how to help someone who was so against the educational philosophy of inclusion embrace CTI. However, I was up for the challenge in order to support the students in the classroom.

Perhaps the mind-set of me versus Charles was not the healthiest collaborative approach but I soon fell into my normal patterns of watching and listening as a CTI partner. Day one in Charles's classroom was surprising for no other partner used the pronoun "we" as often as Charles did on that day. This mention of "we" not only motivated me but also softened my defensive attitude in the situation. My softening continued as I watched and listened. Charles truly cared about students. He asked them about their weekends, activities, and aspirations. Charles would connect curriculum to their lives outside of the classroom. I did not always agree with some of his opinions about student lack of engagement, but my respect grew for him daily as I watched and listened

Slowly I began to be more active in class. I became a model of note-taking and question asking. I mentioned current events. However, I was ever cognizant of my face time in the classroom. I was not trying to take over but rather complement an experienced content teacher. Charles accepted my developing role, but I did not feel encouraged to go beyond the basics of support and logistics. I felt our relationship started

off slowly and then stalled in November before our collaboration reached discussions of content area knowledge. In addition, there seemed to be a disconnect starting in our classroom community. I began to observe some frustration among our struggling learners with the content, which in turn frustrated Charles. We were not covering material at the pace set by previous classes; in addition, our students were not doing well. Charles insisted the issue was with the students and their lack of engagement with the material in, as well as, out of the classroom. I very much disagreed but I was also very aware of the fragility of our relationship as collaborators. I was not sure if Charles would respond well to me challenging his beliefs at this point. So instead, I tried to drop hints. I tried unsuccessfully and soon our collaboration began to become us simply co-existing in a classroom.

Disappointment and aggravation overwhelmed me as a CTI support partner. I felt ineffective. I felt I supported neither the students nor the teacher. I did not want to create a negatively charged environment, but I was not sure how I could help struggling learners without Charles embracing some different methodologies. I felt useless. Not being able to identify the core of the frustration, I opened up about my collaboration with Charles to the Steering Committee. I needed support. I felt like as if I had entered into couple's therapy alone; however, I wanted this collaboration to be successful for the students and for Charles. After a lengthy and somewhat tear-filled rant of my issues, the Steering Committee felt it best that the Associate Principal of Curriculum meet with Biology teachers and myself. Perhaps the issue was not with the collaboration but rather with something else.

Shortly thereafter, a meeting commenced that allowed Charles to express his frustrations. The Associate Principal of Curriculum listened and nodded, acknowledging Charles's obstacles with students and curriculum. Charles questioned how he could teach Biology to some of these students. The Associate Principal of Curriculum responded by asking if we were here to teach the curriculum or the students. I recall a pregnant pause and then Charles asking if he could have permission to revisit the curriculum with the needs of these students in mind. Permission was granted. Looking back on this conversation, what is so interesting to me was the insight the Associate Principal of Curriculum had about this situation. When Charles asked for permission to revisit the curriculum, his definition included methodology.

I realized that with this permission came a great opportunity. If Charles felt he could revisit curriculum and use different strategies then maybe he could experience student success. From what I had observed, Charles was only approaching the curriculum using one or two methods. Not all students could access the content information and that had resulted in frustration for both. However, new leeway with the curriculum, allowed Charles the opportunity to deviate from what was perceived as THE biology curriculum and gave him impetus to learn new methodologies. What I was hoping to share with Charles during the rest of our collaboration was that he did not need to sacrifice the said curriculum at all by practicing various methodologies.

Shortly following that meeting with the Associate Principal of Curriculum, the Biology class was slated to begin a new unit on genetics. One struggle I observed with our students at the beginning of the year was a lack of background knowledge.

“...Students who lack sufficient background knowledge or are unable to activate this

knowledge may struggle to access, participate, and progress throughout the general curriculum, where reading to learn is a prerequisite for success” (Strangman & Hall, 2009). Students had nothing to make a connection to or to build on to make meaning in biology and this resulted in lack of engagement in activities and discussion. With this struggle in mind, I began to review the traditional genetics unit. The vocabulary alone was a bit intimidating for me as an adult. How were our struggling students going to grow in a unit that had so many new vocabulary words?

I began to reflect on our learners. Their literacy levels ranged from about 6<sup>th</sup> grade to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. I reflected on Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development theory. “It is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). How could we scaffold such difficult curriculum for students who struggled with basic science concepts? Using the biology textbook book so far had not been successful. Some students could not read the textbook independently. Technology was an option but we were sharing a laptop cart with too many other teachers and availability was sporadic. I knew that whatever I suggested to Charles it had to be of high interest for the students, content-centered, and an experience that would encourage engagement. This opportunity to create a lesson that introduced a new method to the students and Charles was critical for our collaboration.

Thinking about biology as a foreign language, I remembered in my early years of school I acquired a lot of my basic vocabulary from visuals. Could I use visuals to activate prior knowledge on genetics, as well as, use the visuals as a point of reference for

students to continue to build their knowledge? This could address the needed scaffolding. Also, I believed that Charles would see a new method to approach a unit and to discuss vocabulary, rather than assigning students to look up the words in the textbook or to take from notes on the overhead.

In one night, I designed a lesson that contained about seven pictures of two families. My wedding pictures actually proved rather useful, and I have learned over the years that students find it interesting when teachers share some information about their lives. I used the photos to create a genetics detective game. During the game, students not only had to write down what pictures they believed went with what family but also mention why. What I hoped was that as students began to discuss their reasons for why which pictures were connected to which family some of the genetics vocabulary would emerge (see Appendix C Genetics Game Directions).

The next day I shared the idea with Charles. I knew it was a risk since pace and the traditional curriculum had influenced so many decisions already that year, but Charles agreed to take a risk. As we introduced the genetics detective game to students, we immediately began to hear some vocabulary words. We watched, rotated around the room, and listened. We were quickly able to assess student knowledge about genetics. At one point, I remember thinking that it felt as if our collaboration had begun again. I felt as if I were part of the classroom. Charles and I were a team and our kids were engaged. How could we keep this momentum going?

Once again, I knew not to push too hard too soon. I found myself chatting with Charles after class and then during lunch. We had another period in common and I would stop in once a week to chat about our students. Charles and I reviewed all the data

we could find on our current students such as PSSA scores, Terra Nova scores, and their current schedules, which informed us of current math levels. Data revealed the multiple levels of skill mastery and skill deficits that existed in our classroom in reading as well as in math. A significant range in skills existed and this informed every lesson and activity we planned.

### **Literacy Development**

As our planning began, conversations focused on literacy development. Charles and I began to discuss before, during, and after strategies with students. We did not start with a biology text but rather with a recent movie. Conversation began with who was interested in seeing the recent release and why. Students commented on actors, predicted the plot, and so forth. Then I shared my experiences during the movie such as making connections to other plots and discussing characters. After giving away just enough detail but not too much, the class discussed their after movie rituals such as going for ice cream to debrief the movie or even texting a friend with a review. This discussion of movie as text became the foundation we built off for before, during, and after reading strategies for all text.

After this foundational literacy discussion, we began a ritual in the classroom to work on improving reading strategies in biology. Every Friday became Literacy Friday. Charles and I found articles online, articles in magazines, videos, and many other texts to use on Literacy Fridays. Accompanying every text, we developed a BDA (Before, During, & After) worksheet (see Appendix D). Our goal was to scaffold for our students reading strategies we hoped that would become somewhat automatic by the end of our

time together. Students responded well to this added activity to our weekly routine. In fact, one week when teacher inservice landed on a Friday students wanted to know if Literacy Friday could be moved to Thursday. In addition to students embracing Literacy Fridays, Charles and I began to notice increased participation during class. We felt the texts used on Literacy Fridays provided students with background knowledge on Biology topics and gave them a reference that did not exist before. Charles began to realize that taking time for literacy engagement truly supported Biology curriculum despite interrupting the set pace of delivering the curriculum.

### **How Do You Know What You Know?**

One of the first questions Charles asked students was, “How do you know what you know?” There was no response. However, this one question inspired our inquiry into retention rate, thinking, and Bloom’s Taxonomy. After working on literacy development, observing increased engagement and retention, Charles and I began to think about levels of thinking and what that would look like in lessons, activities, labs, etc. Bloom’s Taxonomy (see Figure 2) provided us as teachers with scaffolding for our learners. In order to achieve higher-level thinking such as applying students needed to be able to understand and remember. As simplistic as this sounded, we recognized how easy it was to jump levels of thinking and assume students would be able to begin evaluating due to pressures of pace and lack of informal and formal assessment. Using Bloom’s as a constant reminder, Charles and I felt we could facilitate experiences in the classroom that would lead to higher intellectual engagement that would result in greater retention of content knowledge. However, we still pondered the process of learning.



(Overbaugh & Schultz, n.d.)

Figure 2 New Bloom's Taxonomy

### **Self Reflection on Learning Styles**

To begin, Charles and I reflected on who we were as learners and then we began to think about our needs as learners. We asked ourselves how best we learned or acquired information. Charles could read an article and quickly make connections and gain knowledge on the topic but I did not possess enough background knowledge to learn and retain information in that manner. Not being a content specialist, allowed me to express my needs as a learner in a more authentic way. This was my first time being exposed to biology content in a very long time and needless to say, my retention of the content was low. I expressed my needs as a visual learner to Charles. In fact, during class I would create visuals and interject during the lesson. For instance, as we were prepping for a lab about genetic variation in a moth population during the Industrial

Revolution, Charles read a long narrative describing the change in environment thus resulting in the genetic variation. During this narrative, I visualized the two different moths that lived in the two different forest environments. While Charles continued with the narrative, I grabbed some construction paper and scissors and created a visual.

Charles then finished the narrative and turned to me and asked, “Do you have anything to add Mrs. Schwab?” That invitation from Charles, which he always offered, permitted me to share my understanding of the narrative about the moths using visuals. To this day, Charles uses the visuals during lab preparation. In addition, beyond our own learning styles, we began to discuss application and practice of content knowledge.

In all of my collaborations up to this point, I had never felt that my strengths in literacy were being used in concert with my partner’s strengths in content knowledge. In addition, we complemented each other so well in the classroom. There became an ease in our teaching and our relationships began to grow. The classroom community was being rebuilt on a foundation of trust and respect.

The year progressed and literacy practices became routine in the biology classroom. I lead many discussions on various texts and taught mini lessons on writing in the content area. Charles would observe me during this time, and later we would debrief about which students needed more support or simply if the lesson went well and why. Eventually, we would co-teach some of the literacy lessons as Charles became more comfortable with before, during, and after reading strategies. Reflection became part of our daily practice. Together, we were constantly reading professional articles and searching for new ways to approach the Biology curriculum.

Around May of that year, the bond we had created with our students was heart warming. We knew about their struggles and successes in and out of the classroom. Charles and I shared stories of how we used biology in our own lives. Students began to realize my obsession with Oprah as I discussed various show topics that related to our classroom studies. The classroom community was one of trust, safety, and inquiry.

With this developed understanding of ourselves and our students, Charles and I created one last project to assess the genetics unit. The genetics unit introduced complex vocabulary to our students as well as new skills such as creating pedigrees and Punnett squares. However, using various texts to support and inform our content area knowledge, students engaged with this difficult material. The challenge was to create an assessment that provided students with an opportunity to share their understanding of the material but to do so without their skill level compromising the knowledge they needed to share.

Charles and I began by creating a rubric that reflected our goals of teaching the genetics unit (see Appendix E). The rubric reflected our value of literacy in the biology classroom as well as our understanding of the relationship between literacy and content knowledge. Additionally, the rubric included a category called “Components of the Scenario.” This category gave us the flexibility we needed to address the diversity of skills in our classroom.

In order to provide each of our students with the opportunity to engage in this end of unit assessment to the fullest of their ability, Charles and I created three different scenarios to assign to students based upon ability. Each scenario contained a reading component, reflecting various readabilities, which set the scene for the scenario. At this time, we did not realize that what we were doing was called differentiation; however, our

goal was to provide an opportunity for all of our students to express their understanding of genetics. Every scenario offered was based off a piece of text that included a BDA worksheet. After engaging with the text each student needed to address the questions posed in the given scenario. In order to answer questions students needed to use skills learned in the unit such as creating a pedigree and then students expressed their findings in written format (see Appendix F). Charles and I knew this end of unit assessment would challenge our students thinking, organization, and literacy skills; however, using mini-lessons and one-on-one conferencing, students experienced success. Furthermore, Charles and my collaboration reached beyond any other I had before and with every discussion about students and curriculum our inquiries to do what was best for students continued.

It was very difficult to say goodbye on the last day of school to our kids as well as to our partnership. We could only hope that schedules would work out in such a way the next school year that we could work together. By the way, it did and continues to do so to this day.

### **Charles's Reflection on the Blind Date**

At the end of our second year together in the classroom, Charles was asked to share some of his CTI experiences during our end of the year celebration. He was nervous which made me nervous. I truly was not prepared for what I heard on that day. On June 19, 2008, Charles shared the following:

Charles began by explaining that he was there to share what CTI meant for him. In order to do so he felt the need to provide some background knowledge about himself.

Charles had been in the military and during that time he went through intensive training especially during flight school where Charles quickly learned that if you do not fit the mold then you will be separated. To be part of the homogeneous group was the goal.

Charles continued his presentation with discussing his teacher certification experience. He felt that his teaching certification experience began with a false sense of success and or expectations. Going into this first classroom was a rude awakening and was Charles's first introduction to heterogeneous groupings. A crippling assumption resulted that unsatisfactory performance was due solely to the student. He confessed, "It could not be me that could be part of the problem."

Another concern for Charles as he started his teaching career was promotion opportunity. In the military, the levels of experience were clearly acknowledged but what did teaching have with regard to acknowledging professional growth. Early on he learned about being a master teacher: a teacher who can make a small difference in the lives of students. This level of master teacher became a personal goal for Charles, believing as he did that life is all about relationships. In addition, while student teaching exposed Charles to a variety of teaching strategies, he was not given the knowledge of when to use such strategies. So not only does a master teacher make connections with students but also a master teacher knows when to use different teaching strategies.

As Charles entered into CTI he was experiencing a decline in the positive relationships he had with his Biology students. The students were changing but Charles was not, thus resulting in a major disconnect. This disconnect caused an increased anxiety for Charles. Again, Charles believed, "This wasn't my problem ... it has to be the students." Charles was not able to admit to himself that he was the problem because

“If you always do what you always do ... then you will always get what you always get.”

Charles realized that he was going to have to change to reconnect.

About sixteen minutes into Charles’s presentation he uttered the words that I had always assumed but never heard him say, “I was not a believer in CTI.” Then Charles continued, “CTI has brought everything together for me. I now know why we have different teaching strategies and why you should be using one over another. I felt like I was able through CTI to take control of my teaching once again. Before CTI I do not know if I would have agreed with this statement but I truly believe that every student is capable of learning and they want to learn. ... what Denise has helped me to understand is where they differ is the skills they use to acquire and process new information.”

Charles explained, “You should always have a rationale or reason for why you are doing anything ... and now with the teaching side I feel like I could give a reason ...my relationships are back. CTI has reignited me for becoming a master teacher again. I feel I now have to tools to obtain that master teacher level of instruction.”

The presentation continued with a reflection on our partnership. “I would not be able to stand here and be sharing any of this if it were not for what Denise has meant to me in the classroom. And it is because of the benefit of our day-to-day relationship that I am able to grasp the individual needs of the students ... We model a relationship based upon trust. The trust we model the students truly sense it is about them... Students need to trust each other ... that is more difficult. Trust has to be from teachers to students and students to teachers. I would like to think we are living the model of trust in the classroom.”

Our partnership encouraged Charles to create new professional relationships beyond the classroom. “It truly does take a school to educate some of students. It has allowed me to talk a common language with our learning support staff. That has really been a resource that I undervalued prior to my experience.” CTI encouraged the boundaries once set between learning support and content area teachers to be blurred.

Charles mentioned that not only did his relationships with colleagues change but also his ability to reconnect with students: “I don’t see students just as Bio students anymore but as a student that we are all working with toward a common goal.”

Charles’s presentation continued to a hushed and rapt audience. He began to discuss what he refers to as his “Ah Ha Moment.” At one point, teaching and learning meant one thing to Charles, perhaps what some refer to as the empty vessel approach; however, with his reconnecting with students, Charles realized that teaching and learning was much more. “What Denise has shown me is some of the strategies and methodologies she has used. ... I am hoping we are giving our students the opportunities to say what the curriculum means to them ... what I am hoping is that this will be a reflection of their enduring learning. ... They are proud of their product. This is me giving this to you and I am hoping your value it.”

Charles closed his presentation with a quote from Mother Theresa: “‘We could do no great things in this life ... only small things with great love.’ Since my CTI experience that quote actually has meaning to me now. I think because of CTI and because of the growth, the path that Denise is still helping me to follow, I do think I am hopefully able to do small things with great love for some of our students ... who

otherwise I would not have been able to make this connection with without my CTI experience.”

### **Conversations**

Our inquiries throughout this year were many and somewhat scattered. In fact, as illustrated above, one question about thinking then led to a question about learning, which then led to a question about teaching. Regardless, Charles and I focused on our students and reflected on ourselves as learners and teachers throughout our many discussions about the Biology curriculum. Our numerous discussions about learning and curriculum truly enhanced and further developed our collaboration.

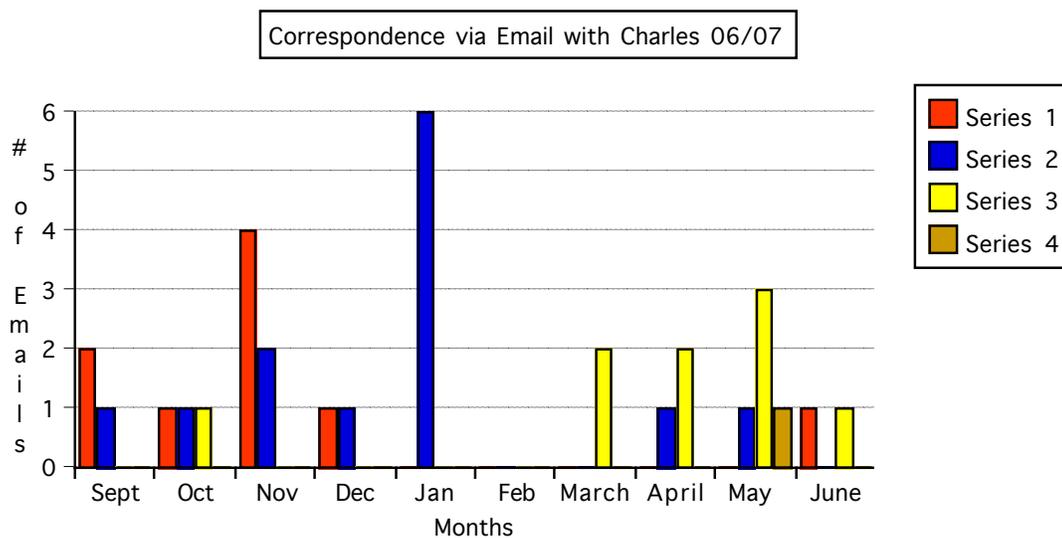
Charles never minded speaking face-to-face but email was another story. I would not categorize this form of communication as Charles’ strong suit. Regardless, due to time constraints, sick days, or just being in other places, occasionally we did turn to technology to aid our correspondence.

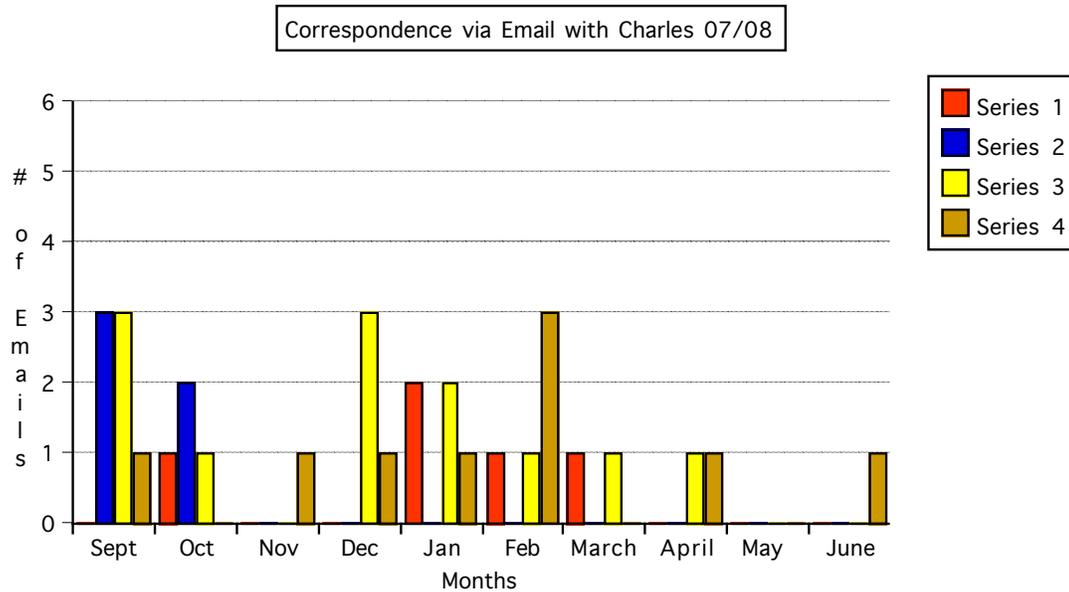
As mentioned previously I am a bit of a hoarder. In fact, I never delete email. I have this bizarre fear that I will trash something that is pivotal to my life. Weird fear but it exists. Nonetheless, I went back into my email folders and separated out all email correspondence that involved Charles and me. Some emails were just between us while others were to us or from us.

Figure 3 represents my sorting of the emails into categories and frequency.

1. Series One (Logistics) appears a lot at the beginning of our first year together. It continues into our second year but not as frequently.

2. Series Two (Student Inquiries) also appears frequently at the beginning of our first year. However decreases in our second year together.
3. Series Three (Curriculum & Instruction Inquiries) makes a brief appearance in the beginning of our first year but becomes constant during the last third of the year and continues into the next.
4. Series Four (Professional Inquiries) makes a momentary appearance toward the end of our first year, but makes almost a constant appearance during our second year.





Series 1 = Logistics (meeting times, reminders, notification of sick days, etc.)

Series 2 = Student Inquiries (observations, concerns, support, learning support updates)

Series 3 = Curriculum & Instruction Inquiries (literacy activities, lesson planning, scaffolding, grading, learning styles, etc.)

Series 4 = Professional Inquiries (professional articles, professional roles outside of the classroom, etc.)

Figure 3

#### Type and Frequency of Correspondence with Charles

So what does this say about our process of collaboration through the lens of email? Series One is about logistics such as meeting times and meeting reminders. As our collaboration began during 2006/2007 I was attempting to develop some routines for our relationship so we could get to know each other as well as our students. Much like a dating couple you may text your new partner to check on the next meeting. There is an

interesting reassurance sending an email and receiving a response that the meeting is on. There is still a connection, a shared purpose, and motivation to try to make the partnership work.

The Series One emails continued less frequently in the next year and this is due to our routines being carried over from the first year. Although our routines had already been established, in the middle of 07/08 the frequency of the Series One emails increased. These emails were attempts to reschedule various meetings and inservice time missed by either Charles or myself. The difference in these logistical emails is that in 06/07 they focused on our collaboration in the biology classroom. In 07/08 the logistical information focused on biology department workshops and inservices. When thinking about acceptance of members into a given discourse, such as the Biology department, this data reflects a small step toward inclusion.

The Series Two emails focus on our students. The first year of our collaboration involved a lot of emails from learning support teachers about some of the challenges our students faced. The complexity of some of our students' disabilities required a lot of communication about observations in class to learning support teachers as well as updates from the learning support teachers about behaviors outside of the classroom. Charles and I discussed all of these emails at length due to the fact that we had so many questions about how best to serve some of our students. I believed that even though email was just a small percentage of our communication that these in-depth discussions with learning support teachers provided Charles with a new perspective of the expertise of our learning support colleagues.

The Series Three emails focus on curriculum and instruction inquiries such as methodologies and literacy activities. In our first year of co-teaching, Charles and I did not start actively communicating about curriculum and instruction until late into our first year. Consequently, this matches a pattern I have recognized in other collaborations I have had over the years (Figure 1 Patterns in My Collaborative Relationships). The frequency of these emails increased significantly in our second year of collaboration. The major shift from our first year to second year regarding this topic is that the first year involved a lot of modeling from my expertise as a reading specialist and English teacher. The second year reflects a much more collaborative approach to such activities that reflected more co-teaching. Once again, the first year centered around getting to know each other as professionals and as people, understanding each other's areas of expertise, taking risks, and developing together as co-teachers in an inclusive setting.

The Series Four emails focus on professional inquiries such as our roles outside of classrooms. The first year only one email fell into this category. As we began to wrap up the year and think about final exams the question of our assignments for next year arose. At this point, after all we had been through and all of the progress we made as co-teachers for our students, we were uncertain about our partnership for the next year. Would Charles be a CTI teacher? Could I be his partner? Historically, partnerships that were successful did not always remain for members of the Steering Committee felt that co-teaching skills had been acquired and then could be shared with new partners. After sharing this information with Charles, he wrote the following to my department chair, who also sat on the CTI Steering Committee:

To the Associate Principal of Curriculum,

We are meeting as a Bio Department tomorrow to generate our Bio grid for next year. If I teach CTI Bio again next year, I would request that I be able to co-teach with Denise to the maximum extent possible in an effort to enhance the initiatives implemented this year. I am very excited with our efforts relative to the CTI Bio curriculum.

V/R

Charles

This email, which Charles shared with me, I felt reflected our growth as co-teachers and I truly shared in the sentiment.

In 07/08 the frequency of these emails increased. Our correspondence reflected our roles outside of the classroom and what we were learning about standardized tests, literacy, standards, etc. These discussions typically influenced our practice in the classroom. It is as if the blinders came off and our teaching was more than just about what happened in the classroom. We were bringing in real world materials to read, write, and discuss about in the classroom.

Early in 07/08 one local topic that grabbed our professional interest was a paranormal society convention. Personally we both became intrigued about defining what science is and what science is not and the gray area in between. In talking about the content outside of the classroom, relating it to our own experiences, Charles and I then took these discussions, readings, and videos to critically analyze in the classroom. It was a hit! The students could not believe we were going to discuss such a topic in class.

What we learned together was about bringing local as well as personal interest into the classroom and how to critically analyze how it pertains to the content area.

Series Four is truly a reflection of growth, trust, and motivation to reach every student in our classroom. Writing about this topic brings back the emotional memories of how I felt after introducing this lesson to the students. As a teacher, you know when you have hit the mark and students are not only engaged but they are thinking, questioning, and inquiring. That feeling is why we teach. For me that feeling is why I endure the journey of co-teaching. The end result is priceless.

So what does this data say about the process of collaboration? First, co-teaching conversations are very much like dating. In the beginning, you are careful and somewhat reserved because you really want to get to know your partner. You are hopeful and motivated to put the energy into the relationship since you have a common interest (in this case, our students). Then you slowly start to introduce your partner to others in your life who you respect (learning support teachers) with the hopes that your partner will share the same feelings. Next, as you get through the initial stages of the relationship (much of the first year) then you feel you can start to discuss some of the more serious topics (methodology, curriculum, literacy). If you make it through these stages then you eventually reach such a level of trust and respect and security, which some would call marriage, that you can have disagreements and you can discuss hard topics without it affecting your relationship. Who knew that email could reveal so much?

### **Blind Date Conclusion**

Charles and I reluctantly, but professionally, joined into a partnership together. Much like a blind date, there were many moments of discomfort and tension even though we shared the same goal of student success. We reached out for support when times were tough and luckily our administration/Steering Committee created professional scaffolding for Charles and me. No one or two people could transform a curriculum or methodology that had become THE how and what to this content area over the years. As a result of this realization, the permission to revisit the curriculum provided Charles and I with what we perceived as an accomplishable goal. “Change in instructional practice involves working through problems of practice with peers and experts, observation of practice, and steady accumulation over time of new practices anchored to one’s own classroom setting” (Fullan, 2001, p. 97). Together, with all of our support, we were able to help students feel and be successful and to help Charles move just a little closer to that level of being a master teacher. Furthermore, our discussions about curriculum, although not always easy, I believe, created more potential for our level of collaboration. I comprehend the uniqueness of this relationship and its outcome and can only hope as the CTI program continues that all of my partnerships and the partnerships of others will result in some of the richness and growth that this relationship has given to me.

## **Chapter Six Findings**

“The focus shifts from the personal to the institutional, in order to establish a link between micro and macro contexts” (Durate, 2007, Issues Emerging, para. 1).

The findings of this study, as pertaining to my research questions, are two-fold. They link the “micro and macro contexts” of this autoethnographic case study (Durate, 2007). My research was guided by the following questions:

1. How did my collaboration with Charles develop over time (process)?
2. What strategies were helpful to my collaboration?
3. What implications does our collaboration have for moving toward a secondary inclusive model?

The first findings are personal and relate to the micro context of the biology classroom, which I have so fondly shared with Charles. Recounting my collaborative experience encouraged a depth of reflection and inquiry that has influenced me as researcher to analyze collaboration with different eyes. Having time and space to separate the experiences and reflections provided my dual identity within this autoethnographic case study as participant and researcher with room to flourish. These findings pertain to my lessons learned about self, other, and culture from the co-teaching experience with Charles.

## Micro Context Findings

*How did my collaboration with Charles develop over time (process)?*

As challenging and unique as relationships are over time, I believe from reflections of collaborative co-teaching experiences with others that a pattern of process exists for me (see Figure 1 Patterns in My Collaborative Relationships). The dating metaphor truly captures the tentativeness of partners, the building of a foundation of trust, and the time it takes to get to know your partner before serious, in-depth conversation can happen. This collaborative process and the nature of the relationship including support partner actions can be catalyzed by one main variable and that is the closeness of the relationship, which is compromised of teacher need and trust.

The retelling of my collaboration with Charles revealed that despite knowledge of collaboration models, professionalism, and a shared goal, that a major influence of one self is one's own personal historical experience within a discourse. Seems obvious right? However, it took need, risk taking, reflection, collaborative support, administrative support, and a passion to help students succeed to realize this disconnect existed for Charles in his own membership in the discourse of teaching.

Charles' shared during his reflections on the blind date, which was our collaboration in co-teaching, that his lack of connections of purposeful methodology and curriculum created disconnect for him with his students. Additionally, since there was no real foundation built into his own personal experiences about the importance of methodology selection, his views of CTI were negative. Consequently, this lack of personal experience created a roadblock within this discourse as well as within our collaboration. However, once we uncovered this void of understanding about

methodology Charles' variable of need catalyzed our collaboration of co-teaching in the biology heterogeneous classroom.

*What strategies were helpful to our collaboration?*

My personal experiences in this partnership with Charles revealed collaborative strategies that were helpful in our process. First, as we began to develop a collaborative relationship we needed to create time and space for us within the context of the traditional school setting. As our conversations via email reflect, one of our first actions as collaborators was to create some rituals and routines for our communication to happen. Rituals and routines acknowledged our new collaborative relationship and significance in the culture of our school day.

Secondly, another strategy that emerged during this autoethnographic case study is that our foundation of our collaboration was built on our shared interest in our students' success. For months our conversations and many of our interactions focused primarily on students. These discussions are traditional in the discourse of education, which I believe is why we were so comfortable and engaged in these discussions. Approaching them collaboratively created potential for Charles to understand not only the membership of the learning support teachers in our discourse but also it created potential for inquiry and reflection to become collaborative for us. What is that saying that two heads are better than one? In this collaboration, our inquiries about students and their learning created solutions that neither of us could have come up with individually or implemented individually but together we created potential for success.

Third, another strategy that emerged in this study that supported our collaborative growth, which is heavily connected to the strategy just mentioned, is to review available student data such as standardized test scores. These conversations between Charles and myself lead to discussions about skill deficiencies, literacy development, and after some time to how to embed literacy skills intentionally into lessons in order to provide students with vehicles to share their knowledge and understanding about the curriculum.

Conversations about student data was not threatening or tense due to the fact that our students were the common factor in our relationship. Their scores did not reflect on us individually but informed us collectively as the students' teachers. Additionally, discussing data that informed us about literacy skills provided me with an opportunity to share my expertise as a specialist with Charles.

*What implications does our collaboration have for moving toward a secondary inclusive model?*

For my collaboration with Charles during the time of this study, which is captured as completely as possible, I believe the implications are obvious. I smile as I write this line. With just one collaboration in a heterogeneous classroom, which was supported by administration in every way, created a new way of knowing this discourse of teaching not only for Charles but for both of us. Collaboration, through struggles and success, if supported can create a synergy and potential for learning that cannot exist with one teacher alone in the classroom. Additionally, this positive, supported collaborative co-teaching experience created a confidence for Charles and me as partners to approach the needs of all learners using various methodologies.

## **Macro Context Findings**

*How did my collaboration with Charles develop over time (process)?*

As mentioned above in the micro context findings, administrative support aided in Charles' understanding the relationship between methodology and curriculum. Shifting beyond our personal collaboration, administrative support plays a key role in influencing the collaboration process for the entire school culture. First, when principals prioritize their time around CTI, others in the school community such as non-CTI teachers realize the value that is being placed upon collaboration. "Schools at which principals devote time to the development of an innovation are more likely to have teachers committed to its practice" (Sindelar, Shearer, Yendol-Hoppey, & Liebert, 2006, p.318). Discourses are developed around shared beliefs and when members begin to value a certain process such as collaboration, other members of that discourse become exposed to these happenings. Exposure does not suggest acceptance or denial but rather an attempt to understand and then to make a judgment call.

Secondly, as a collaborative culture expands and becomes supported by various members of the discourse, it is important for administration to allow growth to be organic and voluntary. You cannot force membership into a discourse and expect for it to flourish. CTI was never a top down initiative but rather an initiative that came from the concerns of teachers. However, the participation of coordinators and administrators in "The Meeting" as well as a shared concern influenced the quick initiation of CTI. Support, a steering committee comprised of teachers and administrators, and flexibility with scheduling, partnerships, and professional development encouraged the growth and continued development of CTI.

*What strategies were helpful to our collaboration?*

Charles and I used rituals and routines as a strategy to create a foundation of a shared discourse. Institutionally speaking, the CTI Steering Committee since the formation of the initiative felt the significance of creating opportunity for ritual and routine by offering extended contract time (three hours) or release time (half-day) for partnerships. This time is provided to discuss the needs of the students in CTI classrooms as well as how best to meet those needs. This component is presented to CTI staff during inservice at the beginning of the school year in the format of a preliminary calendar. Dates are suggested for these opportunities to be taken throughout the school year during each marking period. Additionally, memos are sent during the year to content area teachers reminding them of the opportunities. Encouraged ritual and routine acknowledges the importance of creating a time and space for collaboration to flourish and to focus on a heterogeneous populations.

Furthermore, another institutional support of the process of collaboration is workshops offered throughout the year to participants. These workshops tend to be based on need surveys or requests made by departments or CTI collaborators. Sharing experiences in as well as out of the classroom expand the discourse that a collaborative co-teaching experience develops. Offerings of such opportunities exist; however, one challenge is cost to release content area teachers and CTI partners for that amount of time during the day.

*What implications does our collaboration have for moving toward a secondary inclusive model?*

During an end of year CTI celebration, Charles shared his experiences with CTI to a very captive audience of peers, administrators, and the superintendent. His open, honest presentation about his initial assumptions about CTI being negative and then his final reflections revealing his professional growth captured the essence of collaboration within a co-teach setting. This critical moment of sharing personal experience to others in the discourse created a greater context for CTI. Charles reflections encouraged his listeners to be reflective as well about their philosophy, their methods, their students, and their collaborative relationships. Charles became a renewed member of the teaching discourse through his shared experience of collaboration in CTI. This once isolated teacher collaborated, reflected, and grew.

Activities, tasks, functions, and understandings do not exist in isolation; they are part of broader systems of relations in which they have meaning. These systems of relations arise out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which are in part systems of relations among persons. The person is defined by as well as defines these relations (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 53).  
Could these shared reflections with others about CTI experience redefine collaboration in the macro context of the high school?

After Charles' presentation, a new trend began with CTI celebrations as well as with CTI inservices and that was for participants to share their experiences. Encouraging such feedback, motivated participants to reflect on their experiences with CTI and revealed the value that slowly expanded through our school culture for this initiative.

Furthermore, embracing the manner in which experiences were shared influenced participants to look for data such as skill improvement, fluency, and comprehension assessments, in their experiences. Our discourse began to become a reflective and inquiring community of practice and with every year more and more people became part of CTI.

CTI has not only affected the physical and social structure of the classroom but of the school as well. This program, which began with 16 classes in two grade levels (9-10) in 1999, has expanded into a current school-wide initiative involving over 62 classes across four grade levels (9-12) as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

*CTI Class Timeline*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Science</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>World Cultures/History</b>	<b>Math</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Total</b>
1999/2000	4	4	4	4		<b>16</b>
2000/2001	4	11	8	9		<b>32</b>
2001/2002	6	12	10	10	4	<b>42</b>
2002/2003	8	15	12	6		<b>41</b>
2003/2004	10	16	16	5		<b>47</b>
2004/2005	11	17	20		2	<b>50</b>
2005/2006	18	21	23		1	<b>63</b>
2006/2007	23	15	21		2	<b>61</b>
2007/2008	20	17	21		2	<b>60</b>
2008/2009	19	20	21		2	<b>62</b>

CTI has impacted the school in several ways, which expand from the classroom to climate as well as from the teachers to the students.

I believe it has had a positive impact on students, staff and climate. This is evidenced by the data showing student success, decrease in referrals for discipline, and the surveys of staff satisfaction. In addition, hard to measure but very evident from the

research is the very positive impact (self esteem, etc) on identified students by being successful in the general ed classroom. (CTI Steering Committee Member)

Students are more successful academically then they have been prior to being in CTI and student behavior has improved. Having two adults in the classroom provides numerous benefits to the teacher; furthermore, having two adults in the classroom provides for even more support, academically and behaviorally, for the students.

### **Reflections**

Throughout this study, I as researcher and practitioner have given myself time to fully review the literature on collaboration, to reflect on my experiences with collaboration, and to create artifacts that represent my journey. One artifact I wish to revisit and revise is Patterns in My Collaborative Relationships (as shown in Figure 4).

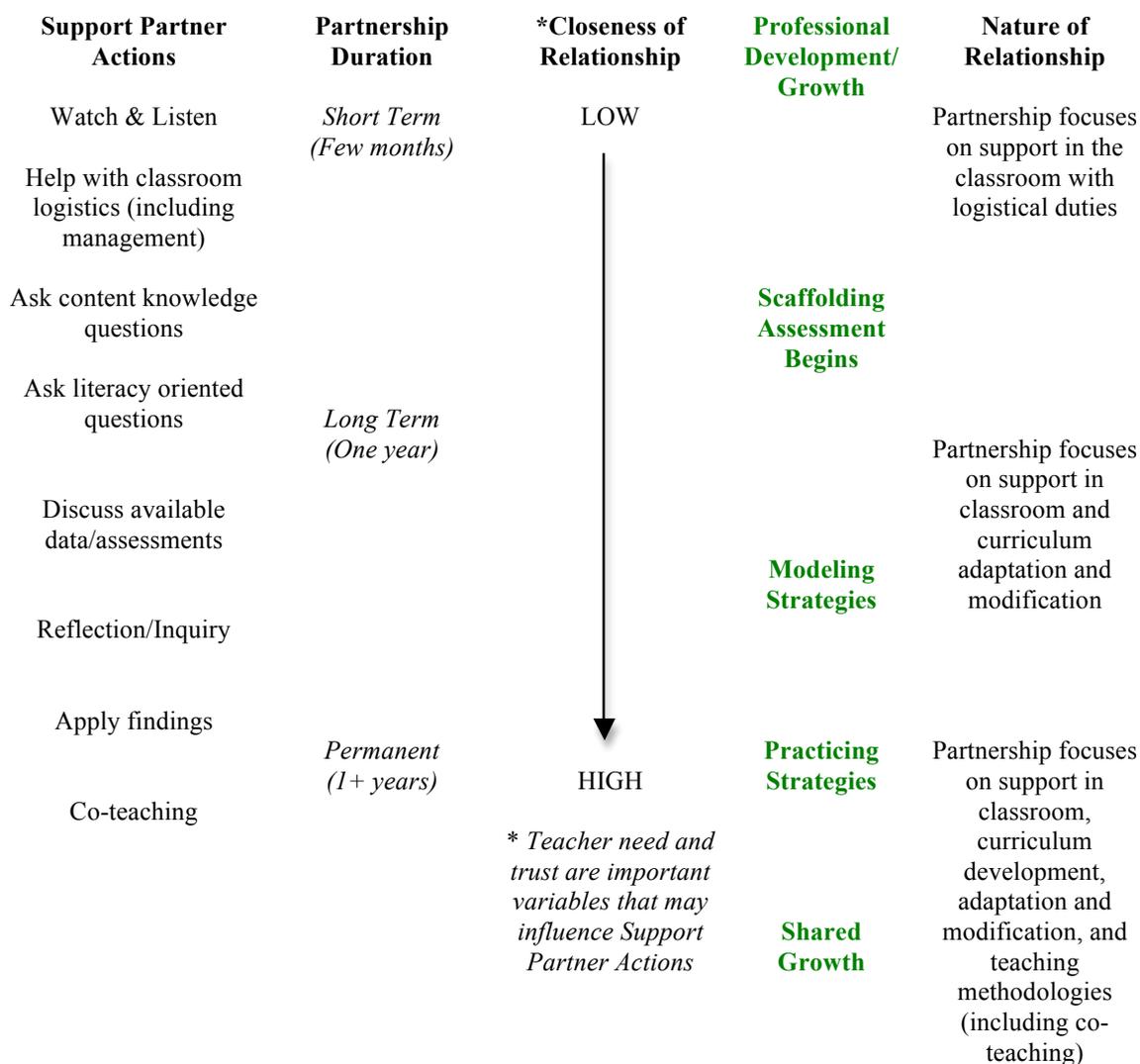


Figure 4 Revised Patterns in My Collaborative Relationships

Inspired by *Types of collaborative relationships* [chart] (2010).

I feel that a major component of collaboration that is absent in models as well as in characteristics of collaboration is professional development or growth. For Charles and my collaboration, professional development began with assessing the scaffolding required for the situation. Then when Charles received permission to revisit the curriculum, we entered into professional development that focused on modeling of

strategies. As time continued, and this is present in emails we shared, modeling turned into practice. After the first year, our professional development became more of a shared experience. Instead of me emailing possible approaches to literacy instruction Charles would email me about various methodologies he read about for the biology classroom. Professional development or growth is a significant component of collaboration that needs to be acknowledged and further explored as part of this amazing journey.

Additionally, I urge future researchers to reconsider the marriage or dating metaphor used for collaboration. After this study, I realized the exclusive nature that is suggested by a marriage or dating metaphor. This metaphor acknowledges the development of a relationship but due to our society's understanding of marriage there is an inferred exclusiveness of those in a marriage that does not represent goals of collaboration.

## **Conclusion**

Students are always our focus in CTI. However, shifting my typical thoughts of curriculum and instruction to that of relationships and discourse and back again during this study allowed me for the first time ever to truly critically analyze a collaboration. By challenging who I am as a researcher in order to better understand who I am as a collaborator has been worth every lost hour of sleep, every frustrated tear shed, and every late night conversation about my writing. Collaboration in a co-teach setting is more than a model provided in an article, more than friends sharing a space, more than the right personalities clicking. Co-teaching allows you to reflect on who you are as a teacher, revisit your philosophies and methodologies and then to pair your experiences and

knowing of self with another to create a unique condition that would never have been possible in isolation. Keeping in mind, all of this is done because CTI is critical for some students in order for them to experience success but the experience is truly good for all.

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## Appendix A

May 9, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I am confirming that Denise Schwab did collect the data she used for her doctoral study as a normal part of her professional responsibilities as a member of our Collaborative Teaching Initiative (CTI) at [REDACTED]. Additionally, I acknowledge that Mrs. Schwab also has access to grades of the students involved in the CTI and may use them in a non-identifying manner to further her research.

Sincerely,

  
[REDACTED]  
Craig  
Principal

## IRB Approval Email

From: "Brown, Amanda" <[aeb29@rtto.psu.edu](mailto:aeb29@rtto.psu.edu)>  
Date: Thu, May 26, 2011 08:24 AM  
Subject: IRB#37102 Secondary Inclusion: A Case Study  
To: "'[dds153@psu.edu](mailto:dds153@psu.edu)'" <[dds153@psu.edu](mailto:dds153@psu.edu)>  
CC: "'[jmm12@psu.edu](mailto:jmm12@psu.edu)'" <[jmm12@psu.edu](mailto:jmm12@psu.edu)>

Denise Schwab,

The Office for Research Protections (ORP) has reviewed the eSubmission application for your research involving human participants and determined it to be exempt from IRB review. You may begin your research. This study qualifies under the following category:

**Category 1:** Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. [45 CFR 46.101(b)(1)]

### PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING:

- The principal investigator is responsible for determining and adhering to additional requirements established by any outside sponsors/funding sources.
- **Record Keeping**
  - The principal investigator is expected to maintain the original signed informed consent forms, if applicable, along with the research records for at least three (3) years after termination of the study.
  - This correspondence will also be available to you in PRAMS at [www.prams.psu.edu](http://www.prams.psu.edu).
- **Follow-Up**

- The Office for Research Protections will contact you in five (5) years to inquire if this study will be on-going.
  
- If the study is completed within the three year period, the principal investigator may complete and submit a **Project Close-Out Report**: <http://www.research.psu.edu/orp/areas/humans/applications/index.asp#other>
  
- **Revisions/Modifications**
  - Any changes or modifications to the study must be submitted through the eSubmission application for this protocol in PRAMS ([www.prams.psu.edu](http://www.prams.psu.edu)).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Amanda E. Brown, CIP

Research Compliance Coordinator II The Pennsylvania State University | Office  
for Research Protections | The 330 Building, Suite 205 | University Park, PA  
16802

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## Appendix B

### WHAT MAKES YOU TICK? WHAT TICKS YOU OFF?

#### Classroom Routines

1. What are the instructional routines for the classroom? For example, is there a bell-ringer everyday?
2. What are the organizational routines for the classroom? For instance, is there a folder for missed homework assignments?

#### Discipline

1. What is acceptable/unacceptable behavior? For instance, is it okay for students to just get up and use the pass anytime during class?
2. Who is to intervene and at what point in the students' behavior?
3. What are the rewards and consequences?

#### Feedback

1. What is the best way to give each other feedback? Email, text, phone call, etc.?
2. How will we ensure that both positive and negative issues are raised?

#### Noise

1. What noise level are we comfortable with in the classroom?

#### Pet Peeves

1. What aspects of teaching and classroom life does each of us feel strongly about? For example, is it okay for students to be eating during class?
2. How can we identify our pet peeves so as to avoid them?

#### Presentation

1. How can we convey to students and other (teachers, support staff, parents, etc.) our roles in the class we share?

#### Philosophies

1. What is your philosophy about the role of teacher and teaching and about students and learning?
2. How do your instructional beliefs affect your instructional practices?
3. HOW DO YOU DEFINE SUCCESS?

## Appendix C Genetics Game Directions

### Genetics Detective

1. Select a leader and give him/her the envelope.

**Leader must read the following to the group:**

*In this envelope there are seven pictures. These pictures represent 2 different families. In one family, there are 3 generations represented. It is our job to determine who is in what family and why.*

2. The leader must select a volunteer to be a scribe. The scribe's job is to write down the rationale or reason for the group's decisions as they are made. Do not wait until the end to do this!
3. The leader will pass the envelope to someone and ask him/her to randomly select a picture.
4. Place that picture in the middle of the table.
5. Pass the envelope to another person and have him/her select another picture. That person must say if they think the people are related and why.
6. Repeat #5 until there are no pictures left in the envelope.
7. After deciding upon who is what family and organizing the pictures to reflect the group's decisions, the "CLUE" envelope may be opened.
8. After making a final decision, have the scribe read back to the group their rationale for placing the pictures of the people in each family.
9. The leader will then present to the class the group's final decision and their rationale.

**Appendix D**  
**BDA Worksheet Example**

**August 20, 2003**

**Baby Swaps, Crime Scenes, and DNA Testing**  
**By Emily Sohn**

Before

What do you think this text will be about?

What do you think happens in a veterinary genetics lab?

What are some ways that scientists can help endangered species?

During

If you had the job of a geneticist, what kinds of things would you do?

What is the problem when two endangered animals accidentally exchange their babies?

Why would anyone want to know an animal's lineage?

After

What details or aspects of the text matter most? Why?

What do you still not understand?

## Appendix E

### Genetics Guide Rubric

<b>Category</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Needs Attention</b>
<b>Participation</b>  ( ____ Points)	Used time well in classroom and focused attention on the project. Was not a distraction to other students.	Used time pretty well. Stayed focused on the project most of the time. Was not a distraction to other students.	Did the project but did not appear very interested. Focus was lost on several occasions. At times, was a distraction.	Participation was minimal OR student was hostile about participating. Student was a distraction
<b>Scenario Reading</b>  ( ____ Points)	Student clearly and concisely completes the before, during, and after strategies. The summary clearly and concisely describes what the reading is about.	Student clearly completes the before, during, and after strategies. The summary accurately describes what the reading is about.	Student completes the before, during, and after strategies. Student summarizes most of the reading accurately, but has some slight misunderstanding.	Student has great difficulty with before, during, and after strategies, including summarizing the reading.
<b>Components of the Scenario</b>  ( ____ Points)	All required elements are present and additional elements that add to the project (e.g., thoughtful comments, graphics) have been added.	All required elements are present.	One required element is missing, but additional elements that add to the report (e.g., thoughtful comments, graphics) have been added.	Several required elements are missing.



VITA

Sumer 2011

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EDUCATION

**Ph.D. Candidate in Curriculum and Instruction.** Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA. Research interests: collaboration, inclusion, and curriculum development. Expected completion: August 2011.

**Master of Education.** Language and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA. Professional specialization: Secondary English. Master's Thesis: *Professional development collaboration: An intern's perspective on the structure of a pilot program.* August, 1999.

**Bachelor of Arts,** English, Columbia University, New York, NY, May 1998.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2002/Present **High School: Reading Specialist.** Generates and facilitates inservices on literacy across the content areas, inclusion, assessment, and curriculum development. Created and maintains a database using FileMaker Pro for the Reading Department focusing on previous recommendations, academic support, and PSSA scores. Participates in the Collaborative Teaching Initiative (CTI) Steering Committee. Conducts CTI grade analysis and scheduling. Co-teaches CTI classes across the content areas including English, history, and science. Teaches Strategies for Academic Success for grades 9 and 10. Wrote and received ABC grants for school literacy activities such as beginning a book club for struggling readers. Maintains budget for South Building reading staff. Supervisor of After School Homework Club(Spring 2007). Participant in Advisory Council(2006-2007). Member of the Professional Development Committee(2003-2004). Consultant for professional needs/development. Member of Building Data Team (2009 – present). Member of the Building Leadership Team (2010/2011).

2000/2002 **High School: Reading Specialist, English 9 & English 10 Teacher.** Taught English 9 and English 10 CTI classes. Participated in the Secondary Professional Development School as a mentor. Co-advisor of the senior class. Participated in the Student Assistance Program.

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Spring 2006  
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Pennsylvania State University: Adjunct Professor LL ED PDS  
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Pennsylvania State University: Graduate Lecturer LL ED 597 D