Chapter 5
Provide Support and Collaborate
Getting Help and Building a School Community

CHAPTER GOAL

Understand how the concept and practice of support for teachers and students works in effective inclusive schools to strengthen learning and the school community.

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

1. Understand effective methods of grouping students and ways in which students may provide assistance to one another with teacher guidance.
2. Develop skills in collaborating with other professionals in the classroom in teaching students with a wide range of abilities and needs.
3. Recognize the roles of various support staff in working in the general education classroom.
4. Comprehend practices and principles of effective support for inclusive teaching.

When we think about having students of truly different abilities and backgrounds in our classes, students who may not be able to talk, who may read far below or above grade level, who may not speak English, who are poor, who may have seizures or use a wheelchair, or who may be unable to see, we may feel overwhelmed. How can we manage? Our teaching methods make a great difference. However, we also need *support*. As we shall see in this chapter, support involves multiple forms of assistance from others—the emotional sustenance afforded by a listening ear, ideas to help us improve our teaching or deal with challenging students, solutions to problems with parents, and more. When we are asked to perform a task in which we are unsure of our abilities, we often ask, "How can I get help? Can someone help me learn how to do this? Can someone help me feel like I am not alone?" This is natural. Support is critical in successful inclusive teaching. Let us visit a classroom where teachers are getting help in teaching students with special needs.

Co-teaching in a Middle and an Elementary School: *A Study in Contrasts*

Mona has begun her twentieth year as a middle school science teacher with excitement and trepidation. Last year she attended workshops on project-based learning and decided to take a risk and organize her teaching around problem-based projects, using textbooks only as a reference. She and the social studies teacher, Mark, are teaming to link science and social issues. It's been

hard work but has gone pretty well so far.

Monclair Middle School is also including students with special needs, even bringing two students with severe mental retardation back from a segregated school. Teachers met at the end of last year and planned carefully to place students in heterogeneous groups; they made sure not to cluster students with academic or behavioral problems in any one class and to ensure a distribution of races and genders, even matching students to teachers based on their personalities. One student with severe mental retardation, Hasna, was in Mona's class. Terrified at first, Mona was relieved to have the full-time help of a paraprofessional, Jan, and part-time support from the special education teacher, Bob. However, she became increasingly concerned as Jan and Bob both worked with Hasna on separate activities at the back of the class, isolating her from the other students. What to do? One day she talked with Bob. "I am wondering," she said, "could you help Mark and me design our lessons so that Hasna can participate?" This idea was foreign to Bob and Jan. "We don't really know your curriculum," they said.

However, they decided to try, and the situation is slowly improving. For example, last week they studied the environmental impact of pollution, and the class divided into two groups. One group took water samples from the pond next to the school. Another interviewed local environmentalists. Hasna chose to go with classmate Amy in the interview group. The children and their teacher discussed how to include Hasna and decided to videotape the session. Hasna would turn the videotape on and off. The school technician helped them connect the camera to a switch. Hasna ran the camera with some help from Amy. She was so proud! "Since this first time, we daily figure out ways to include Hasna and meet her IEP goals. It's funny that before we had no clue."

Mona has avoided some problems we've sometimes seen. She proactively, respectfully brought the special education teacher and paraprofessional into the class curriculum, simultaneously ensuring that Hasna could participate at her own level. She took responsibility for Hasna, rather than leaving this to the special education staff, while also inviting collaboration. She has set up a situation where all can be part of the classroom community.

At Eubanks Elementary School, arriving for a visit in Hannah Abano's fourth-grade classroom, we find country music playing loudly and children milling about the room. "This is a transition time," Hannah says, "when the kids unwind a bit." Hannah's room is designated as the "inclusion classroom": All fourth graders with disabilities are in her class—four children labeled as having learning disabilities, two with mental retardation, and one with emotional disturbance in a class of twenty-five. Usually a paraprofessional works in the class in the morning and a special education teacher in the afternoon. Today, however, both are in the class together.

Students sit at tables arranged in a U. Nathan, however, has a desk at the side of the room.

After Hannah shuts off the music, we are surprised to see the students divide into three obvious ability groups. One group is working with the special education teacher on forming letters in colored sand. Another group is reading a short book together as the paraprofessional follows a scripted lesson on phonics. The final group is in the hall with Hannah, reading an interesting book together and sharing stories written from the perspective of a character in the story. Nathan continues to work on a puzzle, totally separate from the other students.

We are concerned. We've seen other schools where teachers have students of different ability levels working together, learning skills such as letter recognition and phonics as they are reading and writing. Hannah clearly doesn't know how to do this, however. The special education teacher and paraprofessional are re-creating the equivalent of segregated special education within this classroom. Those with lower abilities don't have the benefit of interacting with higher-ability students, and the more able children themselves are not learning leadership skills.

Support is important. Teachers need support from peers, principals, and families. As Joan, a high school teacher, said about her collaboration with a special education teacher, "The kids love having help when and where they need it. For me, it has been so wonderful because it gives me more comfort in knowing I have support. I don't feel so alone any more" (Peterson, 1999). In this chapter we explore how we can obtain support as inclusive teachers. As you journey with us, think carefully about support you might need in order to teach children with different academic, social–emotional, and sensory–physical abilities, as well as children who come from different socio-economic, cultural, or religious backgrounds.

In this chapter we will explore some details regarding how support is provided for inclusive teaching. Let's start by first looking at how traditional segregated models of education are organized. We'll then look at inclusive models for organizing supports. This will provide us for a base to explore specific collaborative support that occurs in the general education classroom.

Traditional Service Models for Students with Special Needs

As we discussed in chapter one, the key underlying principle for traditional, segregated educational programs could be stated as follows: *special people belong in special places.* That one statement is also the most descriptive of what we see in schools.

Separate Classes

Separate, segregated classes have been developed for every type of difference in schools. These include separate classes for students with disabilities, gifted and talented, dominant language learners, pregnant students, and at risk students. In many cases, a separate class for a category of students may be used for students throughout the school district. For example, a gifted class or class for students with moderate cognitive disabilities might be in one school and students bussed to that school. In such districts, each elementary school might have a class for a specific disability category such as hearing impaired, blind, emotionally disturbed, etc.

The stated rationale for such classes is that they can better meet the needs of these special students. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, no evidence that such efforts have been successful. exists. In fact, the evidence suggests that segregated programs have impactednegatively on the lives of not only students with special needs but the general student body as well who do not have the opportunity to get to know these students.

Despite the stated rationale, often an underlying reason has also been to protect the general student body and teachers from what are perceived as deficits and negative influences of students with special needs. This even includes gifted students who are seen as causing challenges for general education teachers that are too stressful for a regular classroom.

The organizing models of separate classes are varied. In some cases, most often in elementary schools, students literally stay in one classroom all day long. It is common for such students to even go to lunch, gym, and art classes as a group. In middle and high school, sometimes students are in one class all day long. Other schools, however, create departments in which several special teachers teach different subjects. In a high school, for example, four special education teachers might respectively teach language arts, science, math, and social studies. Another model involves the tracking of the entire student body into perceived ability-based tracks with gifted students at the top and students with disabilities at the bottom.

In other cases, students many spend most of their time in a general education class but leave to obtain tutoring and remediation instruction in what is most often called a *resource room*. Remediation aims to improve student functioning in identified deficit areas. The assumption is that students possess within themselves either a deficit or a special ability that cannot be met in the regular classroom and that services must be provided elsewhere by a specialist. In most cases special instruction is provided in a separate classroom or therapy room. Such approaches may become self-reinforcing, perpetuating rather than diminishing a student's need for special services. As students are withdrawn from typical activities in the classroom, they often fall farther behind, creating the perception that they need even more remedial education (Spear-Swerling & Sternberg, 1998; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 1999).

From the perspective of the general education teacher other problems occur. When students are pulled out for services, the need for the teacher to seek strategies for effectively teaching the student in the subject for which he is received services is diminished. The teacher may rely on the special services teacher. This limits the improvement of instruction, not only for this student but other students as well. Further, having several students coming in and out of the classroom is chaotic making it difficult to having consistency and continuity in teaching students.

Separate Schools

Most school districts that use the principle of special places for special people also have segregated schools for some students where students have no opportunities for social interaction with other students. Students with moderate to severe disabilities are most often sent to separate schools. Such schools have also been used for students considered gifted and talented, at risk, and students with problematic behaviors. Such schools are typically called *alternative schools*. The best intent of all separate schools is, again, to better meet the needs of students who have not been considered successful in the general education school.

Separate schools often take students from multiple school districts. In many states, educational services are organized, often by county, that service school districts in their area. These go by different names such as regional districts, intermediate school districts, regional educational services, etc. Students will be carried by bus to these schools, frequently riding as much as two to three hours a day on a bus.

Numerous problems with such schools are evident, however. By removing students with special needs, the general education school does not grapple with improving practices to support all students in their learning. This impacts negatively on all students. From the viewpoint of students with special needs, they are segregated from social interactions with other students and the opportunities to learn from peers with differing abilities and characteristics. Often this leads to a lifetime of segregated services and isolation in the community, dramatically reducing quality of life.

School-wide Models of Support

As schools are becoming more inclusive, teachers and support staff are constantly experimenting with ways to provide support. As we've studied school implementation of support, important principles of effective inclusive support have become apparent. First and foremost, effective support promotes and strengthens inclusion in our classes —it helps us group children heterogeneously, distribute both children with special needs and gifted learners across classes, and teach children of differing abilities together rather than pulling children out to a resource room or to the back of the classroom. Inclusive support helps us build community to deal with behavioral challenges rather than to focus only on a specific child. Support specialists help us design instruction at multiple levels, teach collaboratively with us, and help track each child's progress and needs, coordinating services so that we do not have specialists doing parallel activities. Such support implies the building of a culture of community and care for one another, as well as for children, within the school (Carpenter, King-Sears, & Keys, 1998;; Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

In schools in most countries many specialists provide supports and services to students and teachers. Schools working to implement inclusive teaching will develop organizing strategies to use the services of these professionals to provide support and assistance. Effective schools will develop a process by which all these professionals work together as a team. It is possible, of course, for each professional to 'do their own thing' with little coordination with other services. However, this is often problematic. In such situations professionals often end up working at cross-purposes and frustrate teachers, students, and parents by sending mixed signals.

Interactions of Support, Teaching, and Student Success

A typical pattern is evident as schools begin and move along a journey towards inclusive teaching. We can see various models in the effectiveness and sophistication of

organizing structures for inclusive teaching. Often, schools will start their journey by bringing much of the old thinking of separation and special places for special people into their practice. These schools typically believe the key to success is classroom support via direct instruction and therapy. Such schools tend to spend little if any time in rethinking how they provide instruction so all students can be successful. They often use practices that are very traditional and use support personnel to provide individualized differentiation and adaptations. Schools that are more effective typically begin by looking at their teaching and schooling practices and work towards creating more effective classrooms based on the principles and practices introduced in the Chapter 2 and 4. General education teachers and support personnel are expected to collaborate in using space effectively for all students, using specific strategies to build an inclusive community of learners in the classroom, and develop multilevel, differentiated instructional approaches. In a study by Peterson (2003) several hundred classroom observations identified a pattern in the interaction between the quality of support and quality of instruction on the outcomes for students (see the figure below). At its simplest level, this chart illustrates the importance of multilevel teaching. However excellent the support, it cannot compensate for poor teaching practices. On the other hand, the more effective are instructional practices, the less impact that support has on the judged outcomes.

Models of Student Placement and Support

Schools have developed a range of models to organize such support staff. Some are more effective than others in enhancing and strengthening inclusive teaching. Let's review some of these approaches. As we describe them, you might think how each approach implements these principles of support for inclusive teaching.

Include Some, Segregate Some In this approach, some students are included in general education classes and co-teachers support them in the class. These are typically students with mild disabilities such as learning disabilities and mild emotional impairment. Students with cognitive disabilities or other moderate to severe disabilities are placed in either separate special education classes in the school or go to another school in the district or a separate school that draws students from multiple districts.

Interaction Of Quality Of Teaching, Support, And Student Outcomes

SUPPORTS / TEACHING	Poor Teaching	Fair Teaching	Good Teaching
Good in - class supports	POOR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Fair to poor in class supports	POOR	FAIR	GOOD
Pull out supports: resource room, coordinated	POOR	FAIR	GOOD
Pull out resource room or special class. Uncoordinated	POOR	POOR	GOOD

Poor, Fair, and Good outcomes for student academic achievement and social-emotional well being as perceived by their teachers (Peterson, 2001).

Include All – Clustered Class Placement and Ability Grouping Some schools who are seeking to be inclusive use a model in which students with special needs are clustered in some classes. Other classes would have no such students. Hamilton Elementary, for example, put all gifted students in one class, students with learning disabilities in another class, all dominant language learners in one class, and students with cognitive disabilities in one class. Such schools often will also ability group students within. Typically, there will be little emphasis on developing multilevel, differentiated instruction. The support people will often develop individualized adaptations and work individually or in small groups with students with special needs to the side and back of the class.

With the emphasis on support as the key to success, these schools often provide at least one full time educator to work in a classroom. A special education teacher may work in one third grade class for the full day. Evergreen Elementary School had a special education teacher in two classes for ½ day, morning in one, afternoon in another; a paraprofessional did the same thing and was in each class the ½ day the special education teacher was in another class.

Support staff—special education teachers, bilingual or gifted teachers, speech therapists—in such schools typically believe clustering helps them organize their efforts, minimizing the number of classes in which they work. Harmon Middle School, for example, assigns all students with learning disabilities to one class, second language learners to another class, and gifted students to yet another class. Similarly, Oakdale Elementary School uses a common pattern in which students with special needs are in only one of the four classes at each grade level; a special education teacher works with only two of the four classes. In Eagle Mountain Elementary School, a special education teacher is in the general education class in the morning and is replaced by a paraprofessional in the afternoon. In a variation of clustering, an entire special education class (usually ten to fifteen students) may be merged with a general education class and two teachers may teach the class together.

Despite perceived administrative benefits of clustering for support staff, the practice violates the underlying educational theory of inclusive schooling, replicating the kinds of practices that led to segregated education in the first place. Even with professional support, overloading one classroom with a disproportionate number of students with special needs can mean fewer opportunities for students to model learning, thus creating overtaxed, highly stressed teachers (Blanksby, 1999). Some teachers do not have students with special needs; therefore, some teachers feel overburdened. Other teachers may receive no support even though many unidentified students in their room need assistance. We've seen teachers essentially bartering for who "gets" special students. Classes with special students may become labeled and stigmatized. Coteachers of these classes, too, may experience the type of stigma that has typically occurred in segregated classes in schools (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

Include All: Heterogeneous Class Placement and In-class Grouping Schools who have a clearer vision about inclusive teaching make a commitment to heterogeneous placement of students in classes. In elementary schools, grade level teams often work together to create profiles of their students showing various characteristics and then make recommendations for the next grade level placement. Two schools we have

studied used the following categories:

1. Academic abilities
2. Behavioral and social challenges and needs
3. Socioeconomic status
4. Race
5. Gender

This allows staff to systematically heterogeneously group children while also thinking about the match of specific students and teachers. Once students have been distributed, support staff develop a plan with the general education teachers for how and when they will provide support. The figure below illustrates how such a distribution looks (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Toler Williams, 2000).

In middle schools or high schools, scheduling is more complex, because students no longer remain in one classroom all day. An inclusive secondary school eliminates tracked classes—lower-level and upper-level English and biology, for example. Similarly, it does not have special classes for students with special needs–students with disabilities, gifted students, and so on. Students select classes based purely on graduation requirements and their interests. The elimination of tracked and separate special classes most often ensures a heterogeneous mix of students. When schools find clusters of students developing, they initiate efforts to recruit students from underrepresented categories or to deal with underlying issues. For example, if groups of students with disabilities were signing up for one class, the school staff would want to understand why. Similarly, if classes became racially segregated, this would be a sign of issues to be addressed. Some secondary schools have also found it helpful to schedule students with special needs *first* to insure that they can access classes that are most helpful to them. This simplifies the scheduling process.

Inclusive Grouping of Students For Learning and Support

Since the beginning of compulsory education, schools have sorted children many ways —by age (thus the creation of grades), by ability, by language, and, for many years, by race. The theory for such sorting is seldom articulated and little researched, despite its prevalence as a fundamental organizing premise. When public schools were first developed in rural areas, children of all ages learned together in one-room

schoolhouses. As schools grew, however, experts began using the factory as a model for educational design, and these heterogeneous classes disappeared. Children were organized by age-bound grades. Curriculum was developed based on narrow expectations at each grade, and special programs were created for those who did not fit. This is the basic model by which schools are still organized (Abano, F., 1998; Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

Heterogeneous Student Distribution: An Example

	CLASS 1	**CLASS 2**	**CLASS 3**
Academic Ability			
High	4	5	4
Medium	15	13	16
Low	6	7	5
Behavior			
Excellent	8	7	6
Average	12	14	13
Poor—high support needs	5	4	6
Socioeconomic Status			
High	5	2	5
Middle	14	15	13
Lower	6	8	7
Total in Class	**25**	**25**	**25**

However, children don't all develop at the same rates (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). As with adults, their abilities vary dramatically. In any typical school classroom, reading abilities, for example, will range across four to six theoretical grade levels (Allington, 1994; Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002). Recognizing this problem, schools have begun to group children in ways that keep with children's natural development. The move toward inclusive schooling is consistent with this effort. Effective inclusive schools develop strategies for **inclusive grouping:** grouping across and within classes in heterogeneous groups of children with different abilities, styles, ethnicity, and other

characteristics. Schools are seeking ways to allow students and teachers come to know one another well and to foster continuity across several years. Such connection and support is particularly important for students with special needs.

Students Helping Students: *the Power of Peers*

In inclusive schools we intentionally group children heterogeneously to build a sense of community and support. Students themselves can be the most valuable resource for student support. Teachers often take responsibility for helping students and don't create structures whereby students are taught to support one another in learning. Students can support one another, however, and several strategies help make this possible. We discuss these strategies in detail in Chapter 11.

Multiage Teaching

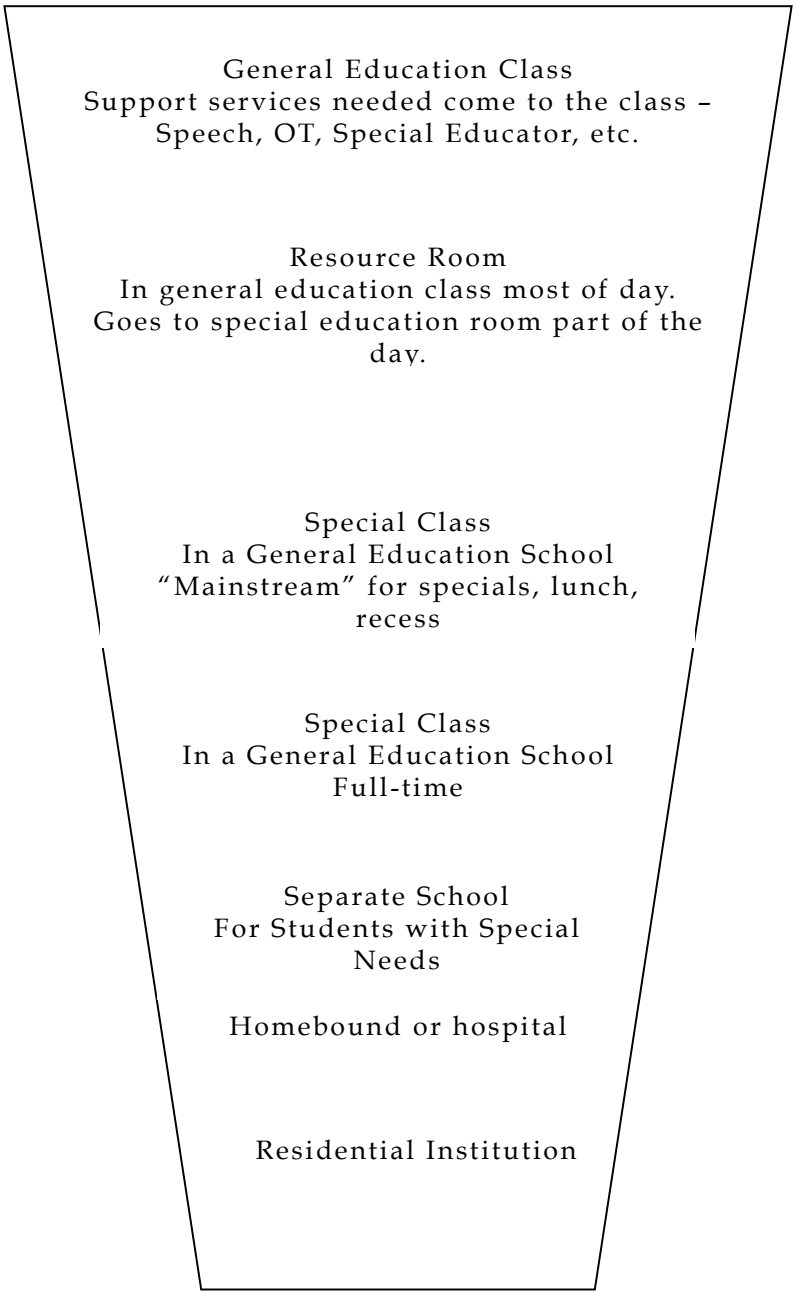
In multiage teaching, students from two to three typical grades learn together in one classroom, using the same curriculum and staying with that teacher for two to three years. Teachers engage students in projects that explore questions and facilitate mutual helping by older and younger students. In a multiage classroom, students work in pairs or small groups as the teacher moves from group to group or conferences with students.

Research has shown that multiage settings offer substantial academic and social advantages compared to single-age classrooms, not only for students with special needs but also for all other students (Feldman & Gray, 1999; McClellan, 1994; McClellan & Kinsey, 1999). Vygotsky (1978) based his influential work on the idea that children learn best from others who differ in ability and that "by playing and working with older and more competent partners, children are able to engage in and master more difficult tasks than they can handle alone" (Feldman & Gray, 1999, p. 508). Younger children learn from older children, and older children learn skills of teaching and nurturing. Students have opportunities to seek out a wider range of styles, interests, and expertises: Sometimes very able younger students are ready to be challenged by older students; at the same time, less able older students have the opportunity to deepen their own skills by leading and helping younger students. Such instruction also naturally enhances social and emotional learning and the development of a sense of community (Chase & Doan, 1994; Feldman & Gray, 1999; McClellan & Kinsey, 1999; Miller, 1995).

Continuum of Services: Traditional Model

.

Less Restrictive



Most Restrictive

Above adapted from Deno (1970). This diagram represents one representation of a continuum of services moving from most restrictive (bottom) to least restrictive and more normalized (top).

Looping

The term **looping** refers to a teacher's moving from one grade level to another along with his or her students. For example, Nancy is a third-grade teacher who is looping with her children and will continue to be their teacher in the fourth grade. The following year she will drop back to third grade and start the same process with another group of children. The effect of looping is that, as in multiage classes, a teacher spends two or more years with the same group of students. This allows the teacher to build a strong relationship with students and parents and to start off each new year more seamlessly. Students and teachers alike find this practice emotionally supportive as well as beneficial to learning (Gaustad, 1998; Grant, 1996).

School within a School

A school within a school is another helpful strategy. Large schools can create a sense of anonymity in which students often feel literally lost in the crowd. To counter this, some schools, particularly middle and high schools, divide the school population into smaller groups in order to build a sense of community, collaboration, and support among teachers and students. A group of one to two hundred students go through their school careers together, often assigned to teachers who work with students over several years. These groupings go by different names in different schools—pods, families, houses, universities, and the like (Peterson, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1994).

The model assumes that the more intensive a service, the more segregated the placement. Frequently, the need to maintain this continuum has been used as one argument against inclusive education. Taylor (1988) suggested alternatively that linking intensive services with segregation is not necessary. Services at very different levels of intensity may be delivered in general education classrooms. Virtually any support service can be effectively delivered in general education. In the figure below is an illustrative example of an **inclusive continuum of services.** What changes is not the physical location where the student spends his or her time. Rather, the type, intensity, and duration of various supports and services change based on the needs of the student and teachers. Thus any particular place, including a general education class, could have intensive services. This model has important implications for both practice and policy.

Continuum of Services: Inclusive Model

Greatest supports and services	All services listed below plus any additional consultative or direct services (e.g., therapist for child and family, psychiatrist).
	In-class support co-teacher works more than half to full time. Circles of support/friends.
	Paraprofessional aide works part to full time.
	Specialist assistance: Speech therapy, occupational therapy, rehabilitation teachers, orientation and mobility, etc.
	In-class support co-teacher provides periodic in-class assistance in adapting lessons and instructs special students or the whole class. Intentional assistance from classmates.
	Collaborative consultation: Periodic consultation with teacher either in or out of class. Building relationships in the classroom.
Least supports and services	Collaborative team planning: General and special education, parents, other professionals.

Using Collaborative Teaming to Provide Support
Gathering the School Community

Effective inclusive schools build a culture of mutual help and support among all staff—teachers, secretaries, support staff, custodians. Helping children is the overriding aim, but all concerned understand that helping one another is a prerequisite for this to occur. Within such a culture, staff and volunteers work in collaborative teams. Let's explore teams we see in inclusive schools.

Collaborative Teacher Teams

Collaborative teams involve two or more teachers who work together at various levels of intensity, from periodic collaboration on a learning activity to teaching lessons collaboratively to a larger group of students. A special education teacher and/or other support person is an integral member of the team. Traditionally, teachers have been organized by grade levels in elementary schools and by departments (e.g., science and math, English and social studies) in secondary schools. As looping and multiage classrooms become more prevalent, however, it makes less sense to cluster teachers by grade levels. In elementary schools, teachers often think of themselves as "early elementary" and "upper elementary" and work in formal and informal teams. In other schools, classes at different grade levels are intentionally placed next to one another so that faculty can develop collaborative, multiage instruction, linking activities in their classes. Innovative secondary schools often use **interdisciplinary teams of teachers:** Social studies, literacy, math, science, and special education teachers work together rather than within separate subject departments (Fisher, Sax, & Pumpian, 1999; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Toler Williams, 2000). Teacher teams often use themes to link the subjects and to bring their classes together in learning (Kovalik & Olsaen, 1997; Manning, Manning, & Long, 1994). In one school, for example, a team of teachers, including special education and **Title I support teachers,** used a yearlong theme of oceans and space as an organizer for many activities. They met across grade levels to plan instruction throughout the year (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

School Support Team

In effective inclusive schools, the ***support staff***—special education teachers, Title I and bilingual teachers, counselors, social workers, psychologists, and others—work as a collaborative team to develop a comprehensive system of support. In Jamestown High School, for example, specialists meet together frequently to discuss children, the needs of teachers, and strategies for particular students. They develop coordinated schedules of support in classes, sometimes intentionally working together in a class, and at other times arranging to be in different classes, depending on teacher and student needs. Similarly, in Three Rivers Elementary, support staff meet formally early in the morning twice each week to discuss students and coordinate schedules (Noell & Witt, 1999; Snell & Janney, 2000; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Toler Williams, 2000).

In less effective schools, in contrast, specialists tend to work in parallel, seeing only the children assigned to their own caseloads and scheduling separately from one another. For example, in one school the special education support teacher and the gifted education specialist both work with children in one fifth-grade class, but they do not coordinate their services or talk together about how to support the teacher in instructing students with such differing abilities (Noell & Witt, 1999; Snell & Janney, 2000; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Toler Williams, 2000).

Inclusive schools organize **child study teams** through which teachers can bring concerns regarding a child to the attention of other staff. Such teams often meet either weekly or biweekly and are attended by the teacher who has referred the student, other teacher representatives, the principal, parents and family members, and support staff in the building—often a special education and Title I teacher (if applicable), counselor, social worker, or psychologist. These teams are called by many names: child study teams, prereferral intervention teams, student and teacher support teams, and more. Sometimes children attend these meetings as well. When the child is present, the team tends to focus more positively on communicating with both child and parent. The child is given responsibility for being part of decision making.

In some cases support teams are built around specific needs and respond to crises, behavioral challenges, or student academic problems. Increasingly, however, to use staff time and energy more efficiently, schools are creating one team that will deal with multiple issues, recognizing that problems are often linked (Fisher, Sax, & Pumpian, 1999; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin & Toler Williams, 2000).

A key purpose of effective team meetings is to provide assistance to a teacher or staff member who is concerned about an issue in his or her class. This is the process referred to as *collaborative consultation* (see Chapter 4), in which a teacher presents an issue and obtains assistance from others. One teacher, for example, was concerned about Randy, a child in her class who had diabetes. Randy's blood sugar level was not stabilized, and he frequently needed to stop work and ask the teacher to help him administer a simple blood sugar test. The teacher was particularly worried about the rest of the class and felt a need for backup from others. She obtained input from other teachers, two nurses who attended the meeting, and support staff—a psychologist, a special education teacher, and the principal. She went away from the meeting with commitments from support staff to help her monitor Randy's situation and deal with the class (Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1994; Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

Individual Student Teams

As we discussed in Chapter 4, teams are also built around students with special needs as part of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a Section 504 plan, or plan for dominant language learning or supports for gifted and talented students. The more intense such needs, the more people may be involved to provide support and assistance. For example, Belita, a student with a mild learning disability whose first language is Spanish, has the special, bilingual, and general education teachers and the school psychologist on her team. Jonathan, a student with a complex medical condition and severe mental retardation who uses a wheelchair and a computerized communication device, has a large team—special education teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist, assistive technology consultant, general education teacher, and nurse. A support staff person will coordinate services to each student and provides some direct support (Bauwens & Hourcade, 1998; Ford, Fitzgerald, Glodoski, & Waterbury, 1997; Giangreco, 1996; Noell & Witt, 1999).

Volunteer Support and Community Agency Collaboration

Finally, the larger community can provide wonderful sources of support for schools and teachers. In many schools parents not only volunteer for projects such as baking cookies but also operate parent resource centers, read stories to the class, or mentor individual students during or after school. Community agencies may also bring specialized resources to the school. (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Nationally, for example, Communities in Schools helps connect schools to community resources. At Merrill elementary school a hospital sends interns into classes on a weekly basis to teach students science lessons related to the body. A violence prevention organization called Common Ground brings a special program into schools to provide emotional support via group meetings with students and to train students in conflict resolution (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

School-wide Student Support Services
Using Resources for Effective Teaching

Most schools employ support staff to provide services to children and families, and these staffers often provide direct and indirect support to teachers as well.

Counselors, Social Workers, and Psychologists

Counselors, social workers, and psychologists consult with teachers regarding student academic and emotional needs, suggest strategies, and provide helpful information. They can provide direct individual or group counseling, contact families, serve on a crisis team, and provide in-class support. For example, a psychologist might offer advice to teachers about self-esteem and conflict resolution. A psychologist–social worker team may facilitate circles of support (Bowen & Glenn, 1998; Carpenter, King-Sears, & Keys, 1998; Quigney & Studer, 1999).

Media Specialists

Media specialists can be invaluable in locating written materials at various levels of difficulty, in providing assistance to individuals and groups of students engaged in research projects, and in training students in the use of computers and other media. Media specialists are increasingly becoming skilled in helping teachers design authentic, multilevel instruction and in working with students with special needs (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

Learning Support Centers

Learning support centers**,** or simply learning centers, are physical locations in schools where any student, not just those with special needs, may obtain assistance for academic, emotional, or physical needs. Centers are staffed by one or more teachers, and students may visit these centers for help or hang out during their lunch period. A laid-back style often makes a learning center a preferred gathering place for students. For some students, time in the learning support center may be scheduled as a daily class. However, students should *choose* to come.

Reflection: For sure, co-teaching is something of a professional marriage. Like marriages, good co-teachers adhere to key principles and practices. However, these can be implemented using a wide range of individual teaching and personality styles. Most teachers who learn to co-teach would never voluntarily go back. They feel more successful and they see the positive impact on their students.

Journey Into the Classroom
Two Co-Teaching Relationships

Sarah and Melanie have been working together for 11 years. Melanie is an upper elementary teacher who has spent her career focusing on how to be a better inclusive teacher. She met Sarah in her first year of teaching, and over the years a strong relationship has developed. Now when they co-teach, the relationship has a fluid sense to it. Once a week they sit down and plan lessons together. Sarah has a busy schedule with other classes. However she works with Melanie in her room one hour a day. They plan their time in writing or science. Melanie comes to the meeting having thought out what she wants to do that week during the hour. Sarah and she then talk through what each person will do, who gathers the materials, and what adaptations need to me made for the several students on Sarah's caseload.

The plans change with the lessons. If they are writing, usually one teacher is walking around encouraging the writer's with ideas, while the other one is running one on one conferences. Sometimes one teacher will take a small group for a focused lesson on one topic. In science, often they are utilizing the lab and each teacher focuses on three tables as they work through doing and writing about an experiment. Once a month, they have a larger team meeting centered around one child in Melanie's room who is both visually impaired and has a cognitive disability. Like many people who have been together a long time, they can communicate ideas with little words being said. They are flexible and supportive of what the other person needs, knowing that each one is focused on the benefit of the students.

In another co-teaching model, Burnadette works with 6th graders in a middle school and plans with a team of 4 teachers. In each class period, she is right there helping explain content and lessons to children. Her role is one of support. In walking around talking to children, however she clearly helps all children and not just her caseload. When the team meets to plan once a week, she organizes materials, study sheets, and other materials for her Identified students. However, one of her ideas is now being used with the whole class. She was taking a powerpoint and making it into sheets with writing space for taking notes. It Is working so well that she is now making that for the whole class. She has one hour a day In which the students come to her separately to work on classwork that they did not finish. She has a passion for her students and a solid respectful relationship with her co-teachers as well.

Co - Teaching
Partnerships for Student Learning

Co-teaching, by which we mean general education teachers working collaboratively with support staff to help students learn, is one key source of support. Co-teaching involves making important changes as we decide to move beyond being a “lone ranger” and to work with others. In effective inclusive schools, teachers have choices regarding

collaboration and professional supports. For example, Nancy is a seventh-grade teacher who teaches children with very different abilities together in creative ways. However, she neither asks for nor wants additional staff support in her classroom. She is able to manage just fine, enjoys teaching by herself, and successfully facilitates mutual support among her students. Jane, on the other hand, teaches sixth grade and thrives on teaming with support staff, collaboratively planning and implementing instruction, and using the strengths of others to complement her own abilities. For Jane collaboration is the lifeblood of teaching. The point is that there is no one way to be an effective inclusive teacher. The key is to know ourselves, our working style, and our desire or need for additional support. If we do seek support, developing our collaborative skills will be critical.

The Purpose and Practice of Co-Teaching: ***Three Approaches***

There are three key approaches by which support staff provide support to teachers, each based on different goals and strategies (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002). Understanding these approaches will help us decide how we want to work with support staff in our class.

Design and Implement Inclusive Multilevel Teaching Most importantly, support staff will work with general education teachers to design and implement multilevel curriculum and instructional activities (see Chapter 11 and 12). The assumption is that instruction can be designed and implemented manageably for very diverse ability levels so that all students benefit.

Design and Implement Differentiated and Adapted Instruction for Individual Students Support staff may work with children in the regular classroom, developing strategies for individual students who need differentiation and adaptations to instruction. An adaptation involves a strategy, specifically selected for an individual student that varies from typical instruction and is designed to help the student succeed (see Chapter 13). In adapting curriculum, support staff typically work within the existing curriculum and instructional approach (Ford, Fitzgerald, Glodoski, & Waterbury, 1997).

Support Needs of Teachers All teachers have both strengths and needs, and support staff can help general education strengthen areas in which improvement is needed. In one situation, for example, the support teacher for at-risk students was skilled in teaching science—so she led the science lesson two or three times a week while the

general education teacher worked with students who were having difficulty. This provided both support and teacher development. In another case a teacher wanted to use a running record (a systematic analysis of errors in a reading sample) for each child but needed to learn better how to employ the strategy. The reading clinician spent thirty minutes twice a week demonstrating lessons in the class and mentoring the teacher (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

Methods of Organizing Co-Teaching

There are many types of staff with whom we may have the opportunity to teach collaboratively. As we work with specialists, we can use one of several methods of organizing our work together.

Team Teaching Perhaps the most common method of collaborative teaching is team teaching between two or more general education teachers. In one elementary school two multiage classes (grades 2–3) adjoin, and the teachers engage in collaborative instruction. At MacNeilson elementary school two teachers decide to teach together in a larger room and combine their two classes for one year; other teachers work together on units organized by themes or collaborate in teaching particular subjects. At Dellian High School, interdisciplinary teams of science, social studies, language arts, and special education teachers have adjoining rooms and work together on projects throughout the year. One high school class reads and writes with students in grades 1–3 once each month, visiting the elementary school for two hours in the morning. Similarly, many upper elementary classes pair with students in grade 1 for buddy reading and special projects. All these arrangements provide additional support and collaborative opportunities for both students and teachers (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin, & Toler Williams, 2000).

In-Class Collaborative Teaching by Support Teachers Teachers who specialize in a particular student group may work in a given school. These specialists, who previously taught students in separate rooms, now often work in the general education classroom. These teachers are typically associated with specially funded programs that include:

- Special education
- Title I (federal funds for schools with high concentrations of low-income students)
- Bilingual education
- Gifted and talented education

Special education and bilingual teachers will have specific students assigned to their caseload, for whom they are responsible. However, they are also allowed to work with the total class as long as the individual needs of the students are met (Dover, 1994). In one classroom, for example, Susan, the special education teacher, and Janet, the general education teacher, plan and teach collaborative lessons. They trade roles in leading the class, helping groups work on projects, and providing direct skills instruction to individuals or small groups as needed.

Roles of Support Teachers

1. Plan with the principal and teachers for new approaches to providing learning supports:
- Organize in-service training.
- Work with consultants.
- Serve on inclusive education planning committee.

2. Plan for individual students:
- Facilitate person-centered planning/IEPs.
- Consult with individual families and attend parent meetings.
- Advocate on behalf of individual students and families.

3. Assist in multilevel instruction and adaptations for students:
- Take leadership in promoting collaborative teaching and cooperative learning.
- Work with teachers to identify strategies for accommodating students.
- Develop or acquire needed materials.
- Help general education teachers coordinate with related services in the classroom.
- Provide direct support and instruction with the general teacher.

4. Facilitate community connections and family involvement:
- Facilitate involvement of students in school-sponsored extracurricular activities.
- Contact Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, community recreation.
- Connect families to one another to provide support.

Source: Adapted from Tashie, Shapiro-Barnard, Donoghue-Dillon, Jorgenson, & Nisbet (1993)

Understanding these various roles is very critical in effective co-teaching. If co-teachers perceive their only role as direct instruction with students, this may actually limit their effectiveness. As co-teachers are able to help general education teachers implement effective multilevel, differentiated instruction by designing lessons or obtaining useful instructional materials they are often needed less for direct instruction. When this occurs they use their time most effectively and expand their impact.

In-Class Collaborative Teaching by Related Services Specialists Many other specialists provide what IDEA calls *related services:* "transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education" (CFR 300.24; IDEA, 1999; Snell & Janney, 2000; Thomas, Correa, & Morsink, 1995).

- *Sign language interpreters* help students who are deaf to understand what is happening in the class and communicate with others.
- *Speech therapists* help students with difficulties in producing sounds and communicating.
- *Audiologists* evaluate hearing ability and make recommendations to maximize students' ability to hear and understand sounds.
- *Rehabilitation teachers* assist students who are blind or visually impaired in using accommodations, adaptive equipment, and materials for daily living and communication.
- *Orientation and mobility specialists* aid persons who are blind or visually impaired in using adaptive strategies to move around from place to place—canes, guide dogs, and so on.
- *Occupational therapists* help students improve fine motor coordination and use of the upper extremities to accomplish functional tasks.
- *Physical therapists* help people improve their gross motor abilities—walking, gait, and so on.
- *School nurses* provide assistance related to health issues and coordinate in-school services with medical services outside the school.

In most of these specialties there is controversy over whether to provide the service in the context of a general education class or in a clinic. For example, speech therapists traditionally work with individual students on speech articulation and other communication strategies in a separate room. In inclusive education models, however, speech therapists come into the classroom and assist students in class communication activities. The therapist often works with a small group and sometimes with the whole class, helping promote language development of all the children while targeting the specific needs of a student with special needs. For example, a speech therapist may work with a student or small group of students on the articulation and production of specific sounds as the children sing a song or read text aloud. The same IEP goals and objectives can be practiced during literature circles or small group discussions. Peers serve as fluent role models and supporters for students with speech/language

challenges, reinforcing and expanding the assistance provided by the speech therapist.

Inclusive Related Services Strategies

DIRECT SERVICES	
One-on-one instruction or therapy	***Small group instruction or therapy***
The teacher or therapist works with the student during a classroom activity to facilitate his or her participation. Instruction or therapy may also occur during activities in the gymnasium, on the playground, at lunch, or at a community site.	The teacher or therapist works with the student with special needs and a group of classmates on an activity that promotes a goal for the student with special needs such as a craft project involving fine motor manipulation for all students that meets needs of the special student or a language development activity.
INDIRECT SERVICES	
Consultation	***Monitoring***
The teacher or therapist recommends and instructs other professionals to carry out therapeutic programs, including instructional or environmental modification, activity enhancement, adaptation of materials, routine or scheduling alterations, or training.	The teacher or therapist maintains contact to monitor status, including scheduling checkups on a regular basis in the classroom.

DIRECT SERVICES	
One-on-one instruction or therapy	***Small group instruction or therapy***

The teacher or therapist works with the student during a classroom activity to facilitate his or her participation. Instruction or therapy may also occur during activities in the gymnasium, on the playground, at lunch, or at a community site.	The teacher or therapist works with the student with special needs and a group of classmates on an activity that promotes a goal for the student with special needs such as a craft project involving fine motor manipulation for all students that meets needs of the special student or a language development activity.

INDIRECT SERVICES	
Consultation	***Monitoring***
The teacher or therapist recommends and instructs other professionals to carry out therapeutic programs, including instructional or environmental modification, activity enhancement, adaptation of materials, routine or scheduling alterations, or training.	The teacher or therapist maintains contact to monitor status, including scheduling checkups on a regular basis in the classroom.

DIRECT SERVICES	
One-on-one instruction or therapy	***Small group instruction or therapy***
The teacher or therapist works with the student during a classroom activity to facilitate his or her participation. Instruction or therapy may also occur during activities in the gymnasium, on the playground, at lunch, or at a community site.	The teacher or therapist works with the student with special needs and a group of classmates on an activity that promotes a goal for the student with special needs such as a craft project involving fine motor manipulation for all students that meets needs of the special student or a language development activity.
INDIRECT SERVICES	
Consultation	***Monitoring***

The teacher or therapist recommends and instructs other professionals to carry out therapeutic programs, including instructional or environmental modification, activity enhancement, adaptation of materials, routine or scheduling alterations, or training.	The teacher or therapist maintains contact to monitor status, including scheduling checkups on a regular basis in the classroom.

Specialists very often benefit the total class. For example, students at Garland High School take sign language courses from sign language interpreters and earn foreign language credit. At Hamilton Elementary School, an interpreter facilitates communication between a child who is hard of hearing and her classmates. The interpreter and the child cotaught a weekly sign language class to all seventy-five students at that grade level. Classmates quickly discovered that learning a new language is challenging and fun. The classmates' parents were pleased that their children were learning sign language, and many children taught family members basic signs.

Other professionals also assist the total class while meeting the needs of the student with special needs. While helping a student who is blind learn how to get around the school, an orientation and mobility specialist teaches the whole class how to function as a "sighted guide." Classmates explore interactions of body, space, and sensation as they learn how the student navigates the school without seeing. An assistive technology specialist identifies a communication device and simultaneously trains the student user and the rest of the class. Special services thus give the class new opportunities for learning, and the student with special needs has an opportunity to shine in front of his or her peers (Etscheidt & Bartlett, 1999; Friend & Bursuck, 1999; Giangreco, 1996).

In-Class Team Instruction In some schools teams of support staff collaborate to support teachers. In some elementary schools, for example, teams in the lower grades assist classroom teachers in intensive literacy instruction. At Harper Elementary School a reading specialist supervises a team of one teacher and three paraprofessionals—individuals who are not certified as teachers but are hired to provide instructional assistance—who spend forty-five minutes each day in the first- and second-grade classes working with the classroom teacher. They break the children into small groups for reading and writing instruction. At MacNeilson Elementary School the speech therapist and special education teacher team with the classroom teacher to do whole class and small group literacy instruction.

In-Class Support by Paraprofessionals Paraprofessionals provide support in many schools. Their roles and relationship with teachers, however, must be carefully defined, and care must be taken to avoid some common problems. As teachers we take responsibility for all students, and we should expect the paraprofessional to work with all students as well as to attend to a student with special needs. A paraprofessional must be supervised by a teacher who is responsible for instruction and student support. We should plan with the paraprofessional at least once a week, defining his or her role in instruction. Paraprofessionals may (McVay, 1998):

1. Lead small group instruction.
2. Provide assistance for personal care and other physical needs.
3. Assist students in completing directions given by the teacher (*all* students, not just a student with special needs).
4. Facilitate interactions among students.
5. Adapt lessons under the teacher's guidance.
6. Implement other needed tasks.

At best, the teacher and paraprofessional share responsibility for all students within the class. The best paraprofessionals learn about the culture of the classroom; find ways to help under the guidance of the teacher; and figure ways to subtly encourage interactions, providing needed support but drawing back to encourage child-to-child engagement. Such paraprofessionals move throughout the classroom, helping all students so that a casual visitor would not see them as assisting primarily one student. The teacher and the paraprofessional constantly look for ways that children can support one another; they coach classmates in ways of being of assistance, consider peers as members of a student's team, and seek to facilitate independence on the part of children with special needs (Doyle, 1997; Friend & Bursuck, 1999; Marks, Schrader, & Levine, 1999; McVay, 1998).

Sometimes, however, problematic practices occur. Giangreco (1997) and Marks, Shrader, and Levine (1999) found that many paraprofessionals spent much of their time close to a student with a disability. These paraprofessionals further perceived a major portion of their job as ensuring that the student was not a bother to the teacher and assumed the role of functioning as the expert on the student, oftentimes taking major responsibility for instructional decisions. The teacher had little responsibility for student instruction or for supervision of the paraprofessional. In some cases the paraprofessional and the student literally worked together in a separate place in the classroom, effectively creating their own isolated environment. Parents may request a paraprofessional to

assist with inclusion, assuming that this will give their child support and ensure success —and often treating the paraprofessional as the person most knowledgeable about their child. Similarly, a teacher may welcome the paraprofessional, initially seeing the person as taking responsibility for the child off their shoulders. We will need to work proactively to use best practices and prevent such problems.

with the classroom teacher regarding effective strategies. A consultant may also obtain materials, facilitate referrals to other services, and coordinate communication with parents. However, a teacher consultant does not often engage in actual instruction. In many situations consultation is provided in response to a short-term need to solve a problem (e.g., inability to complete class work, aggressive behavior) (Boudah, Schumacher, & Deschler, 1997; Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1994). However, the long-term goal is to empower the classroom teacher to solve similar problems in the future (Friend & Cook, 1996; Noell & Witt, 1999).

Bumps in the Road

Getting Around Barriers To Co-Teaching

When the support for planning and teaching are working well it can be a very powerful feeling. There is that old saying that two heads are better than one and that is often the case. Conversely, however, there will be times in any teaching career where the collaborative working relationship you dreamed of is simply not there. What do you do then? Do we give up our dreams of an inclusive classroom that welcomes all children? While we always have a solid goal in mind understand that getting there is a process and, like the children we teach, we can only start with what we have. If you find yourself in a school with limited support set into the every day classroom and the main teacher you find yourself working with, whether that is a general education teacher or a special education teacher is very traditional in her approach and is not looking to gain new ideas, then you have some choices to make. Keep in mind that no matter how tough the situation, there are always things that can be done to make it better. Here are a few thoughts related to some common problems.

Problems in Creating an Inclusive Classroom	Ideas to Make the Situation Better
Children are pulled out for all services.	Talk to the special education teacher. Ask for support in including the child in a subject. Ask if they can come in twice a week to work with your class and observe how things are going.
Special education teacher is resistant to trying inclusive teaching for her children.	Create a written plan of how you will provide what the child needs. Talk to the parents and get them involved in the decision.
A general education teacher is nervous about having a student far below grade level in her class during reading.	Offer to sit down and plan with her for the success of that student. Offer to model a reader's workshop lesson for her and how that might work at that level.
Parents are unsure how you are going to meet the student's needs.	Write out your reasons for wanting the child included so that you can speak clearly. Then be willing to track the progress of the child and arrange a meeting after some time to discuss how it is going.

Collaboration: Success and Barriers

Keeping Children First Sometimes adults get caught up in their own issues—hurts with roots in childhood or anxiety and fears of incompetence. If we can acknowledge these feelings while at the same time keeping our focus on children, we will be more likely to find common ground. This is actually more difficult than it seems, because adults must recognize when their behavior has to do more with their own needs than with the needs of children.

Power Who is in control of what? At best, we come together with support staff and cede some control, developing a shared decision-making approach in which the opinions and perspectives of each person are respected. Differences in competence, philosophy, personal style, and needs can dramatically affect how this plays out. We must seek to develop effective collaborative relationships. However, we will not cede control when we feel that our partners will not or cannot use best practice approaches. At best, both parties identify and share what we see as our areas of strength and learn from and with one another.

What are the areas in which power is most important? At bottom line is the decision about what is to be done, when, where, with what materials, and using which instructional approach. The issue of whose discipline is perceived as more important

may also be evident. For example, if our school has a reading clinician who is providing support to teachers in reading, do we defer and follow that person's direction, or do we engage with the clinician as equal partners in dialogue, expecting that we bring equal perspectives to the table? These are issues we may have to work through with both patience and strength.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION	BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION
■ Collaboration is based on voluntary relationships. ■ Collaboration involves a mutual goal. ■ Each person is equally valued. ■ Each has equal decision-making power. ■ Responsibilities, accountability, and resources are shared.	■ Time for planning is insufficient. ■ Administrative support is lacking. ■ Scheduling problems exist. ■ Personal misunderstandings occur. ■ Roles are unclear.

Source: Friend & Cook (1996).

Philosophy Some teachers aim toward innovative teaching philosophies and approaches; others stand by traditional teaching methods such as worksheets, lectures, and fill-in-the-blank or multiple-choice tests. Many incorporate elements of both in their teaching. In collaborative relationships we may have to work through differences in philosophies. In some cases, we may give very specific directions to support staff regarding what we would have them do in our classroom, mentoring support staff and helping them learn innovative teaching techniques. In other cases, support staff will teach us new strategies and will have unique and important knowledge that strengthens our understanding of students with special needs. As we work together, both partners in a collaboration must be flexible and yet clear regarding our own approaches to teaching.

Balancing and Sharing Competence All of us have areas of strength and need. Sometimes we are aware of these, sometimes not. The balance between collaborating partners can go either way. A support staff person may be the more skilled teacher. If this is the case, such an individual can be a mentor and professional development guide. In one school, for example, teachers were having difficulty teaching math at multiple levels using a new math program. The district hired a support teacher who worked half time in the building and taught a thirty-minute demonstration lesson each

week. The regular teachers thus learned new skills that they used throughout the week.

If we understand ourselves, we know how we can contribute in a partnership and we know where to ask for help. The concept of multiple intelligences (see Chapter 6) can help us think about our own strengths, needs, and styles, as well as about those of our students. As we talk with our partner in collaboration, it is helpful to recognize these different styles, strengths, and needs and to express a respect for the differences between us. If we can develop trust and ask for help in our weaker areas, we will build a bond as a foundation of our work together. We can both contribute to and draw from strengths of others in collaborative teaching.

Beyond Disciplinary Territory We will likely work with specialists from different disciplines—special educators, counselors, social workers, and more. Traditionally, different aspects of human beings have been claimed as the territory of different disciplines. In an interdisciplinary model, the team looks together at all the needs of the individual as a totality. In practical terms, all would look together at literacy, behavioral, social, and sensory–physical needs. This approach brings the wisdom of the total team into play and enhances the capacity of the team to engage in needed work.

Co-Teaching Strategies

What is it that support people actually *do* to help us? As discussed earlier, this will vary depending on our personal approach to including and supporting diverse students in our classroom, our philosophy, and our associated strategies. The framework on which this book is based would lead to the following roles for support people:

1. Designing curriculum, instruction, physical layout, and resources for students with diverse abilities
2. Team teaching
3. Building a community of learners
4. Developing needed adaptations
5. Addressing behavioral challenges, physical and sensory needs, communication, and assistive technology
6. Evaluating students

Depending on our needs and the resources available in the school, this support might involve direct work with students, indirect consultation and assistance, and intensive or mild assistance. As we develop our teaching style over the years, our skills at teaching

multiple levels and building a community will grow, and we may find that we need less support.

Friend and Cook (1996) identified several methods of collaborative instruction. In the first, *one teach, one observe*, one teacher is responsible for instruction while the other observes a student, a small group, or the entire class to monitor learning and develop strategies to improve instruction. Teachers then later discuss observations and use them to drive teaching. In another approach, *one teach - one drift*, one teacher is responsible for instruction while the other teacher circulates to answer questions, bring students back to attention, or provide mini-lessons and assistance. A third set-up, ***station teaching***, occurs when students are placed at "stations" around the room engaging in different activities about a topic. Each teacher delivers instruction to one certain activity. Certain activities are done independently. Groups switch from one station to another at identified times. In *parallel teaching*, the class is split in two groups, and two teachers work simultaneously, each teacher with one group. In *alternate teaching*, one teacher manages the majority of the class while the other teacher pulls a small heterogeneous group aside to preview, review, assess, or provide enrichment. The purposes and membership of this small group change with each lesson and content area. Finally, when two teachers are *teaching together* they manage and instruct the class at the same time, flexibly interacting in the various instructional formats being used—small groups, partners, individual work, and centers.

Villa, Thousand, and Nevin (2004) describe four co-teaching approaches in similar but different terms: (1) supportive; (2) parallel; (3) complementary; and (4) team teaching. With *supportive teaching*, one teacher leads the lesson while the other teacher does something that complements, supplements or enhances the lesson such as asking questions, monitoring students, restating importing information, asking for clarification, adding examples, and modeling for students. In *parallel teaching*, both teachers plan lessons together. Then each teacher instructs different groups of students at the same time. They may teach the same or different content. There are several examples of parallel teaching: split class, station teaching/learning centers, co-teacher rotate, cooperative group monitoring, experiment or lab monitoring, learning style focus and supplementary instruction. With *complementary teaching*, both teachers share in the delivery of the lesson, but may use different methods. For example one teacher may lecture or read aloud while the other takes notes on chart paper. One teacher may also paraphrase the other teacher's statements on the overhead projector. *In team teaching*, both teachers equally share responsibilities for planning, teaching and assessing. It is common for team teachers to divide the curriculum according to each

person's curriculum content mastery, preferences and training. More face-to-face time is required in this approach because more time is needed for planning.

The major differences boil down to answering the question, Is our collaborating partner "teaching with" us or "helping" us? In most of the effective inclusive classrooms we've observed, collaborating teachers use all of these strategies at one time or another. Sometimes it's helpful to have one person stand back and observe or help a few students. Sometimes we break students into small cooperative groups or "centers," and both of us rotate throughout the room. Sometimes we divide the class into two groups and actually teach the same content in these smaller groups. Truly collaborative co-teachers switch in and out of these various roles frequently, often shifting with minimal conversation, as a glance or request will do. Other times, teachers very intentionally plan roles for the day or week and stick to these (Tashie, Shapiro-Barnard, Donoghue-Dillon, Jorgenson, & Nisbet, 1993; Wood, 1998).

In effective co-teaching each teacher takes responsibility for all students in the room. Each teacher also has input into grading and contact with parents. The general education teacher takes responsibility for all students in the class; the special education teacher does not grade only students on his or her caseload. Teachers communicate to parents and students alike that there are two teachers in the room for all children. At best, students do not understand that one is a "special education" or "bilingual" teacher. They know only that they have two teachers in the room. This does not mean, however, that students do not know that their peers have some learning challenges. In a good inclusive classroom the needs of all the children in the class are explicitly talked about, as are the methods for supporting and growing these areas (Patriarcha, Freeman, Hendricks, & Swift, 1996; Snell & Janney, 2000; Tarrant, 1993; Vaughn, Schumm, & Arguelles, 1997; York, Kronberg, Medwetz, & Doyle, 1993).

Issues For Co-teaching

KEY QUESTIONS To what degree have collaborating partners developed agreed on strategies? Negotiated roles with one another? Share power and influence instead of struggling for control?	
Areas in Which Differences May Arise	**Some Examples**

Parent communication and partnership Formality of relationship with parents. Understanding and acceptance of diverse family backgrounds, styles, and problems**.**	One reaches out to parents giving home phone numbers and connecting on the weekend. The other maintains distance. Teachers come from different cultural backgrounds and have cultural and religious differences.
Collaborative relationship Goals and expectations in the working relationship.	One wants to be a friend, the other maintains professional distance. One expects to be in charge, the other wants sharing of control.
Student progress. Expectations related to assessment tools and strategies to be used? Degree of focus on the standardized test?	One teacher believes all should be on 'grade level' or retained. The other does not believe in grading but in individual development. One teacher believes that the standardized test should guide all they do in the class. The other believes assessment should be based on authentic student work.
Planning Time for planning? Degree and detail of planning? Planning ahead? Designing for diversity? Planning meetings, forms, and record-keeping?	One teacher is very systematic, planning carefully and in detail sequences for each day. The other plans global approaches and obtains materials but anticipates students leading the learning in unanticipated directions. One keeps detailed charts and records of each student. The other asks students to do this in their portfolios.
Academic instruction Instructional strategies? Assessment strategies? Assignment of grades? Adaptation and modification of lessons? Sharing teaching roles? Trying new approaches?	One teacher believes children need structure and information needs to be transmitted. He lectures, gives tests, and expects students to be quiet. The other teacher uses cooperative learning and inquiry approaches, believes students should be active in creating their own learning.
Community building and behavioral challenges Classroom rules and routines? Behavioral management and discipline? Trying new approaches?	One teacher believes in a strict enforcement of codes of conduct and strict discipline. The other teacher believes that order comes out of students building a community and that students must be given choices and options.

As we seek to work together in the classroom with other educators, of course, there are many areas in which we may have various perspectives. The figure above illustrates and provides some examples of some of issues that we will need to negotiate as we work together. How we work through these also depends on the style of the individuals involved. Those who have more flexible and laid-back personalities will largely work through these issues as they arise on a day to day basis. For others who feel the need to map out work in advance it may be important to have conversations ahead of time. You

might find this list useful to provide a series of topics to discuss with your teaching partner(s).

To get a sense of how this works, let's hear Erin Herold, a fifth-grade teacher, describe how she and her special education coteacher work together in her classroom. Erin explains (Herold, 1998):

I have been co-teaching for two years. It has been a successful experience. Here are a few things that we do to create a positive learning environment for all our students.

***Planning**: We meet every Thursday morning to go over the next week's schedule. I usually come up with the topic and the general assignments and projects, and she will give feedback. We decide who will teach which component during this planning time…. We spend a bit of time talking about which student may have trouble with the assignment and how we can modify it. All the modification plans are prepared beforehand, but we both know that we can adapt on the spot if needed. This seems like it takes a long time, but it doesn't! … Approximate time: 30 minutes.*

***Teaching**: My co-teacher leads the starter activity…. I then go over the daily agenda. Either one of us will lead the lesson. When one is teaching, the other is either standing in the back, monitoring behaviors, or else sitting with individual students. Occasionally, we will pull out individual kids to work with either of us one on one. Once a week, we try to do some type of bounce back and forth where she will talk, then me, then her, etc.*

***Review of students**: Once every few weeks we discuss each individual student. We focus on their progress, strengths, weaknesses, behaviors, etc. My co-teacher put together a guide of each student's goals for the year, and every few months we review these goals during our whole team meeting to see if and how we are helping them meet these goals.*

***Writing**: We came up with a personal goal that we wanted one strong, solid piece of writing from each of the students on her caseload. We worked together with her students and walked them through answering an essay question from start to finish. We met with each student individually, either after school, before school, or during lunch. Once their piece was finished, we made copies as an example of their best writing. This was put in their IEP record as well.*
These are just some of the things that we do that have been successful. The one thing I can say is that teachers involved in co-teaching really have to make it their own. They have to develop their own style with which they are most comfortable.

Principles and Practices for Effective Co-teaching

DO'S	DON'TS
Really, you can do this! We've seen many teachers collaborating in these ways.	***Really, these are practices we've seen in schools! We hope you don't do them.***
Consider students with special needs as full members of your class.	Cluster all the students with disabilities in one place in the room—at the back, on one side of the room, in their own row.
Work with your co-teacher as a real partner, negotiating and sharing all aspects of work in the	Have the co-teacher act as a teacher helper, copying or filling out forms.
Collaborating staff share responsibility for all students in the class. Students know that there are "two [or more] teachers" in the room.	Have the co-teacher, aide, or other specialist work only with students with disabilities or with other students who are on his or her "caseload" separately from the rest of the class in the back or in a corner of the room.
Make sure that students with special needs are part of all aspects of the class so that outsiders find it difficult or impossible to identify the "special kids."	Enclose an "included" student within a wall of file cabinets to keep behaviors in check.
Work together to design teaching at multiple levels that includes all students. Spend 90 percent of your collaborative time this way and 10 percent of your time doing accommodations and adaptations.	Use the co-teacher or other professional primarily to develop adaptations to your lessons; ignore (or refrain from asking for) advice on how to teach differently for all students.

In the figure above we've listed a few practical dos and don'ts for collaborative teaching. We've seen firsthand both very successful and very unsuccessful practices. The key for inclusive collaborative teaching is this: All children should be a part of the class working at their own level. When people enter our class, if they can easily find students with special needs doing different things in different places from the other children, we have a problem. Relatedly, if a visitor can observe our room and immediately know that a collaborating professional is there for specific students, we have a problem. In both instances we are sending powerful, deep messages to children that they don't belong to the class and that the collaborating professional is not a real teacher. In the process, we are laying the foundation for ongoing problems of acceptance and community in our classrooms (Peterson, Tamor, Feen, & Silagy, 2002).

Caseloads of Support Staff

The term 'caseload' refers to the number and type of students and classes that are assigned to a special education or bilingual teacher or a related services professional. Typical caseloads for special education teachers in inclusive schools are around 20

students though this may vary. Speech therapists typically have much higher numbers often ranging from 40-60. The certification structure of special education teachers can sometimes create difficulties. In many states, special education teachers get certification in a specific disability, eg. learning disabilities, cognitive disability, autism, etc. Other states have more flexible, cross-categorical certification, often along the lines of severity of disability or high incidence (eg. learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and emotional impairment) and low incidence (typically students who are blind, hearing impaired, or have severe disabilities). Increasingly, inclusive special education teachers will obtain multiple certifications since they are dealing with students with a wide range of disabilities in inclusive classes.

In one approach, a special education teacher would provide service only to those students for which they have a certification. Thus, 2-3 special education teachers might be working in one general education class that had students with learning disabilities, cognitive disabilities, and emotional impairment. This practice, however, is problematic in that it can be very confusing for the general education teacher to deal with so many special education teachers coming in and out of the class. Other schools assign special education teachers to classes and expect them to provide support to all students with disabilities obtaining consultation from other special education teachers as needed. This has tended to be a more successful practice and has the advantage of increasing skills and knowledge of staff over time.

If students are clustered, special education and other support teachers are typically assigned to only one general education classroom. We reviewed the problems of this approach above. When heterogeneous student placement occurs support teachers will work in several general education classrooms, typically 3-4. They will negotiate with the teachers involved how to set up their schedule to maximize their effectiveness.

Scheduling and Co-Teaching

As collaborating partners start working together, we need time for planning. Effective inclusive schools have developed strategies that allow teachers time for collaborative planning (Agnew, Van Cleaf, Camblin, & Shaffer, 1994). Monroe Elementary School schedules “specials” (art, music, gym) at the same time so that teams of teachers can meet together. Hernandez Elementary School blocks specials for all lower elementary teachers in the morning and in the afternoon for upper elementary to allow for

collaborative planning time. Still another school, Napoleon High School, closes early one day each week to allow a half day for teacher planning time and in-service development. Incorporating time for collaboration is critical for success.

Collaborating support teachers who work with several general education teachers develop their schedule to address both the needs of classroom teachers for support and the practical limitations of their own timetable. Support teachers are often assigned to teams of teachers. In elementary schools that use multiage teaching, one support teacher might be assigned to "lower el" (K–2) and another to "upper el" (3–5). In a middle or high school that is using interdisciplinary teams, a support teacher might work with one team of four teachers (Wiedmeyer & Leyman, 1991). In a traditional departmentalized high school, on the other hand, a support teacher might be assigned to each department—math, science, language arts, and so forth (Boudah, Schumacher, & Deschler, 1997).

Co-teachers teachers and other staff can help design our teaching for diverse students. We can talk together about our students, about the curriculum, about teaching and support strategies that use multiple intelligences, various learning styles, and multilevel teaching. For example, Marvin felt unprepared to teach science in his fourth-grade classroom. He and Mary, the support teacher, developed a plan in which Mary designed and taught the science lesson each day, as she had strong skills in this area. During this time Marvin assisted the support teacher and helped students with special needs. In another situation, a high school English teacher knew he would have several students in his fourth period who were well below "grade level." He and the special education teacher agreed that she would come to the class for this whole period throughout the first weeks of school. Later, as the semester developed and he gained confidence in his ability to work with these students, she shifted her schedule to another time slot.

Professional Development and Growth

As we begin inclusive teaching, we will likely ask for as much help as we can get. That's a natural reaction. As we develop skills and confidence, however, we will often need less assistance, or at least different types of assistance. That's why support for professional growth and development is a critical piece of inclusive teaching. If all goes well, we will become master inclusive teachers who can then provide support to other new teachers coming on board, sharing our learning at conferences, on listservs, and in daily informal conversations with other teachers. What are key ways we can obtain support to grow and develop as teachers? We'll describe a few exemplary strategies and

structures.

Professional Development Inquiry and Dialogue Groups. Many are increasingly critical of the typical one-shot staff development workshops in which a consultant comes in for an afternoon or a day, gives a talk, and then leaves. Little real growth occurs from such events. More effective are professional development strategies that enable teachers to study and reflect on their own practice.

All over the world, structures are being developed by which small groups of teachers meet to learn together in their own schools. For example, in three elementary schools in Detroit, teachers and a faculty member from a local university meet together once a month, read a book regarding exemplary teaching practice, and discuss instructional strategies. In another school a professional development coordinator initiated similar teacher study groups. In other schools teachers engage in collaborative teaching and demonstrate a new strategy directly in the classroom (Vargo, 1998).

Support Networks of Teachers—Gatherings and Online. In many communities teachers, parents, and university faculty have come together to provide mutual support and work together to improve schools and influence policy. Teachers are increasingly using listservs and chat rooms online to share successes, ask questions, and engage in dialogue about best practices. The Inclusion listserv out of the University of Alberta, with members all over the world, is a forum for daily intense discussion among parents, teachers, and university faculty regarding strategies for inclusive teaching of students with special needs. (Go to www.quasar.ualberta.ca/ddc/incl/intro.html). Many teachers have found both live gatherings and online communication to be valuable sources.

TIME	TEACHER	PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT	COMMUNITY PARTNERS
8:30	Class meeting. Check certain students planners to ensure they are writing what is needed.		
8:50	Journal writing. Model writing in own notebook. Occasionally share.		
9:00	Writers' workshop—Start with whole class 10 minute lesson. Then, small group mini-lessons and one-on-one conferences	Special education teacher and speech therapist work with groups. All teachers collaborate in supporting all students.	Peer relations program teaches social skills once a week.
9:45	Readers' workshop: due date conferences, and one-on-one reading conferences. Two days a week do guided reading groups.	Special education teacher goes with class to library once a week. Bilingual teacher does whole class lessons twice a week.	
10:45	Instructional read-aloud, model comprehension strategies out loud.		Several parents or community volunteers per month read books.
11:05	Exploration learning: approve learning choice for the day, rove and push thinking skills with questions.	Special education teacher conferences with student earlier in the day about what they would like to work on during this choice time.	Residents from local hospital talk to class once a month.
11:30	Specials.		
12:10	Lunch/Recess.		
1:00	Math—one of two groups, same math skills at different levels through spiraling curriculum. Student experts.	Class divides in two with special needs students in both groups. Both teachers work with individual students providing help as needed.	
2:00	Multiple Intelligences Themed Centers	Teachers share ideas for multilevel teaching and resources for centers.	Volunteers help run interpersonal center once a week. Engineers work with students on building and racing toy cars once a week.

Critical Friends and Consultants from Outside the School. An external partner, often called a "critical friend," is important in facilitating positive change and growth in a school. Such an individual comes to know the school well, pulls in additional resources and people, and acts as a supportive critic. For example, Jorgensen (1998) describes working with Souhegan High School and providing assistance in planning and implementing an approach to inclusive schooling. Many faculty at universities have developed partnerships with schools, often supported by grants or contracts. Regional support centers also provide a range of services to schools—video and other media resources, consultants and in-service trainers on various topics, information regarding grants and collaborative opportunities, and professional development programs.

Back Pack
Power of 2 and Paraprofessionals

Power of 2 A comprehensive site for co-teaching in inclusive classrooms after a good video by the same name. Lots of resources and ideas.
www.powerof2.org/

Project Evolve provides resources for training of paraprofessionals. www.uvm.edu/~cdci/paraprep/

Support for the Road

We hope by now you are beginning to have a few concrete pictures regarding how support is provided in inclusive schools. We also suspect that you may be having a range of reactions. You may be feeling: "This is a fairy tale. No school does these things. Certainly, it won't happen in my school!" It is certainly true that the supports we've described don't yet exist fully in every school. However, in most areas some schools are working hard to put such systems in place. You may also be feeling: "Wow! This is wonderful. I had no idea schools were doing work like this to support teachers and students." If so, we confirm that yes, they are. Support is a foundation for inclusive teaching. When supports are effectively provided, the whole teaching enterprise is

strengthened; teachers feel new energy and engagement (Pugach & Johnson, 1995; Rankin et al., 1994); and students increase their learning (Saint-Laurent, Glasson, Royer, Simard, & Pierard, 1998). In subsequent chapters we will build on these ideas, strategies, tools, and information. You will meet teachers, other professionals, parents, and community groups all collaborating in supporting students in inclusive classes.

Traveling Notes

Learning to collaborate with other professionals in supporting children with real differences in our classroom is a new skill for many teachers. As the journey to becoming a real inclusive teacher continues, we can collaborate with other educators to help assure that our students are successful. We need, however, to use effective strategies and not re-create segregation and isolation within general education classes. Here are some notes of key practices we can follow.

1. Students should be heterogeneously placed in classes and heterogeneously grouped within a class.
2. Educators need to work together in teams to support learning. Every school needs a team of support staff who engage in collaborative consultation with teachers and coordinate support services. Teaching teams of grade level teachers are important in providing mutual support and facilitating collaborative learning projects.
3. Children should be inclusively grouped, and strategies for building a community where children help one another are specifically taught. The children know what each person needs to work on and a climate of respect is evident. Some specific organizational strategies include multiage teaching, looping, the "school within a school" approach, peer tutoring and mentoring, circles of support, and cooperative learning
4. Support teachers, paraprofessionals, and related services personnel should provide in-class support and co-teaching with general education teachers.
5. Support should involve direct instruction and indirect supports aimed at helping the general education teacher design and implementation of multi-level, differentiated instruction.
6. While co-teachers may initially provide help and assistance to the general education teacher, over time teachers should move towards collaborative co-teaching where they both share responsibilities for planning and implementation of instruction.
7. Co-teachers should be working with all students in the class and avoid pulling students with special needs to the side or back of the class.
8. Teachers should alternate roles within the classroom, using different types of co-

teaching methods. They work in different set-ups depending on the lesson: small group, whole group, centers.

9. Support staff have a schedule that allows them to work in several rooms and can adjust to best utilize their time and services.
10. Support teachers, specialists and general education teachers should have a comfortable flexible working relationship where they easily work through issues, bounce ideas off each other, and respect the other person.
11. Teachers receive support, as well as the students. This does not always mean teaching support in the classroom. This could be a group that gets together to talk over progress, a strong relationship with one of the support teachers, or a close relationship with some of the families.

Stepping Stones to Whole Schooling

Following are some activities that will help extend your understanding and actions you may take to improve supports for inclusive teaching in your school.

1. Find out how support services are delivered in your school. Where are the special education teachers, and what do they do? How are services delivered to dominant language learners? Do you see evidence of racial separation of students? How is gifted and talented education structured? What about other specialists—speech therapists, psychologists, gifted educators, social workers?
2. Identify a student with special needs in your class who is presently being pulled out of your class to obtain assistance. Talk with a support person about how he or she might provide support in your room instead. Start very small if need be.
3. If you already have support staff in your room, how well is the collaboration working? What model of support is being used? How would you like to see this collaboration improved? Set up a time to talk with support staff about collaborative teaching in your room and how improvements might be made.
4. Interview someone who has successfully dealt with a great challenge. This might be an adult with a disability who has a good job, someone who was once on welfare, or someone who suffered the death of a very close friend. Talk with the person about his or her experiences. What types of support did the person receive? From whom? What difference did the support make? Visit two classrooms, one in which effective in-class supports are operating and the other in a school that has a reputation for not supporting teachers and where special education uses a pull-out model. Talk with the teachers and students. Ask the teachers about problems and challenges with students. What support do they receive, and what is the impact.