Collaboration and Consultation

Collaboration and consultation are two key components of the resource teacher role. Below are some ideas on what constitutes collaboration and consultation.

Collaboration allows educators to work together in a mutually beneficial relationship that is focused on creating and improving educational outcomes for students. Consultation is a form of collaboration that offers a process for effective communication and strategic problem-solving.

The goals of collaboration include:
- Shared decision-making
- Coherent, coordinated, consistent plan of action
- Increased effectiveness of instructional program
- Transfer/generalization of student learning across settings
- Shared responsibility for ensuring student learning
- Professional learning; sharing of effective ideas, strategies, resources

Collaboration Strategies

- schedule a time to talk to admin about services/school model of support
- request involvement in referral/placement decision-making
- be persistent in requests for info, be prompt to provide info when asked
- frequent updates of resource room activities to CT
- ask for teacher input
  - 1-2 classroom concepts coming up in class
  - write, email, meet with teacher if nothing sent back
- build consistency between class and resource room, use same language, same cues
- get included in staff development activities in the school (reading/math coaches)
- be flexible on timing for getting together
- co-plan lessons/units for classroom instruction
- develop action plans together for intervention support
  - build in reviews and end-points
- team teach/co-teach lessons/units in CT’s classroom
  - clarify individual responsibilities
- guided reading and other groupings
- share students for different instructional activities
- model a lesson/new strategy in class
- choose a receptive teacher partner when trying something new
- plan Pro-D activities/mini-inservice sessions for staff
- identify competent peer models to observe
- celebrate successes publicly
- provide follow-up support to intervention in class
• need some flexible timing in schedule to work with students in class
• plan during regularly scheduled consultation time
• workshops: attend together
• share information; offer handouts, ideas, resources

Consultation

Strategies

Formal approach

• establish admin support and clarify budget commitment
• regular consultation time with release coverage for classroom teachers
• use open consultation blocks to release other teachers when possible
• plan schedule for consultation in September
• principal covers class for meetings with CT
• CTs buddy up; one works with both classes while other consults with RT
• RT covers class while CT meets with TA, parents, specialists
• regular IEP planning/review meetings
• SBT/ESBT meetings
  • meet with CT and parent/guardians, with specialist staff
• advance planning of meetings; set time/place/agenda
• read something ahead, discuss together
• attend to meeting priorities
• summarize and share discussion information; provide meeting notes as followup

Informal approach

• e-mail
• notes
• pop in to classroom when you can
• set a “lunch date”
• short conversations during staff meetings
• share resources, strategies, programs, plans together
• phone calls
• positive discussions/updates about student activities
• share evidence of student growth, no matter how small
• get feedback from CT and others on resources, etc.
• make use of the school mail box
• use a back and forth consultation log to write brief notes to each other