# **Spotlight on Collaboration and Co-Teaching**

# 1: Using the Collaboration Tool Designed for Massachusetts Teachers of ELs

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The [**Collaboration Tool**](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA_Collaboration_Tool.pdf)is a multi-layered, multi-purpose tool designed to help curriculum writers operationalize [WIDA Standards](https://wida.wisc.edu/teach/standards) in conjunction with the Massachusetts Curriculum [Frameworks](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/). The goal of the Collaboration Tool is to support curricular planning with the intentional, simultaneous development of language and the analytical practices embedded in the Frameworks. It highlights the need for collaboration between language and content educators and helps teachers prioritize and strategically plan around key uses of academic language in the context of key academic practices common across content area Frameworks. The Collaboration Tool and related processes are planning resources that, among other uses, can help educators prepare to create clear, standards-based language learning goals for developing curricula using the ESL unit template. For more information, please visit the [Massachusetts Next Generation ESL: Project page](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ele/instruction/).

The [Interactive Guide](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA_Collaboration_Tool_GUIDE.pdf) to the Collaboration Tool will walk you through how the Collaboration Tool can be used in curriculum development, starting with Focus Language Goals.

[](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7UUhx4tS1Q&feature=youtu.be)

***See It in Practice:*** This [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7UUhx4tS1Q&feature=youtu.be) features educators in Burlington showing collaboration and co-teaching in action in an elementary classroom. Educators used the Collaboration Tool to support this work.

2: Strategies for Collaboration and Co-Teaching

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Andrea Honigsfeld and Maria Dove’s website [Collaboration and Co-Teaching: Strategies for English Learners](http://coteachingforells.weebly.com) compiles resources around instructional collaborative activities and co-teaching models. The website contains short downloadable articles, videos, and a blog. A sampling of additional resources include:

***Key Collaborative Practices***

| * Joint Planning | * Co-developing instructional materials |
| --- | --- |
| * Curriculum mapping and alignment | * Collaborative assessment of student work |
| * Parallel teaching | * Co-teaching |

***Co-Teaching Models***

1. One student group: One lead teacher and another teacher teaching on purpose
2. One student group: Two teachers teach the same content
3. One student group: One teacher teaches, one assesses
4. Two student groups: Two teachers teach the same content
5. Two student groups: One teacher pre-teaches, one teaches alternative information
6. Two student groups: One teacher reteaches, one teachers alternative information
7. Multiple student groups: Two teachers monitor and teach

# 3: Dig Deeper

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* The [Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSD) Special Education](https://sites.google.com/a/auslchicago.org/specialeducation/co-teaching) webpage offers protocols, templates, and other resources for co-planning and co-teaching from including: a Co-Teaching Checklist, Co-Teaching Expectations, And Co-Teaching Observation Guide and Debriefing Guide, and more.
* Dove, M. & Honingsfeld, M. (2017) Co-Teaching for English Learners: A Guide to Collaborative Planning, Instruction, Assessment, and Reflection. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
* Dove, M. & Honingsfeld, M. (2012). [Collaborative Practices to Support All Students](http://coteachingforells.weebly.com/uploads/8/0/6/6/8066516/collaborative_practices_to_support_all_studentss.pdf). *Principal Leadership*, *12*(6), 40-44.This article presents seven English as a second language (ESL) co-teaching models and explores other possibilities of collaboration between general education classroom teachers, content area teachers, and ESL specialists in the K‐12 context.
* Dove, M., & Honigsfeld, A. (2010). [ESL Co-teaching and Collaboration: Opportunities to Develop Teacher Leadership and Enhance Student Learning](http://coteachingforells.weebly.com/uploads/8/0/6/6/8066516/2010_tj_dove_honigsfield_copy.pdf)
* Dove, M., & Honigsfeld, A (2008). [Co-teaching in the ESL Classroom](http://coteachingforells.weebly.com/uploads/8/0/6/6/8066516/2008_dkg_article_co-teaching_copy.pdf). *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, *74*(2), 8. The authors explore the transferability of co-teaching models and techniques from the field of Special Education to that of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL).
* Education Resource Strategies (2017) [School Scheduling Tools](https://www.erstrategies.org/tap/school_scheduling_tools).
* Kusuma-Powell, O., & Powell, W. [Co-Teaching: Making It Work](http://www.nextfrontierinclusion.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Co-Teaching-Making-It-Work.pdf). Education Leadership December 2015/January 2016, Vol. 73 No. 4. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
* Rettigg, M. [Elementary School Scheduling: Enhancing Instruction for Student Achievement](http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teams/strat11/JMUElementaryschoolscheduling.pdf). School Scheduling Associates.
* Rosenberg, D., Daigneau, R., & Galvez, M. (2018).[Finding Time for Collaborative Planning](https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/3876-finding-time-for-collaborative-planning.pdf).This article provides detailed descriptions and examples of six strategies for finding sufficient time for collaboration.
  + **Back-to-back:** Stacking two blocks of planning time together
  + **Banking time:** Reducing planning time on a few days to increase time on another day
  + **Beginning and End of Day:** Reorganizing time that teachers have at the beginning and end of the day into more planning time
  + **Recess and Lunch:** Scheduling noninstructional blocks like recess and lunch next to planning time, and cover those activities with other adults
  + **Larger Specials:** Creating larger specials classes so that fewer specials classes can cover more core teachers’ time
  + **Enrichment Periods:** Creating enrichment or intervention periods, covered by other adults, to allow teachers to plan
* State of New Jersey Department of Education. [Collaborative Teams Toolkit](http://www.state.nj.us/education/AchieveNJ/teams/). (2015).

# 4: Scenario

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*The following scenario highlights practices and approaches presented in the Department’s Guidance for Sheltered English Immersion Programs. Given the great diversity of Massachusetts districts and their community characteristics, we can realistically expect that there will also be diverse approaches to SEI Program implementation.*

*We do not intend for the scenario to represent full implementation of all ideas proposed in the Guidance, but rather present them as snapshots of what districts and schools can do to put into practice recommendations from the Guidance. As such, we have based the scenario on a mix of what is currently happening in districts in Massachusetts, other states, and national trends in effective English learner education. We also hope that the scenario serve to model and inspire practitioners throughout Massachusetts to plan, act, document, and iterate their own cycles of learning.*

**Scenario: SEI Content Area and ESL Teacher Collaboration**

**Setting: Elementary School, Mid-incidence**

The push towards more teacher collaboration at District E. began with educators at a couple of elementary schools. Small clusters of general education teachers began experimenting with ESL teachers, co-teaching in classes that integrated English learners (ELs) at WIDA levels 2-4[[1]](#footnote-1) as well as proficient English speakers. The ESL and content teachers co-taught during the general education classroom using a variety of arrangements, while the ESL teachers continued to meet with ELs at different times for ESL. Previous professional development led to these early experiments aimed at promoting language development alongside content learning. Sheltered content area teachers referenced strategies and best practices learned in [SEI Endorsement](http://www.doe.mass.edu/retell/) courses as requiring regular, intentional opportunities to collaborate with other teachers working with ELs, such as ESL and special education teachers. Similarly, ESL teachers attending Next Generation ESL professional development brought back ideas for using resources such as the [Collaboration Tool](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA_Collaboration_Tool.pdf) to plan instruction with general education and special education teachers. Together they used the Tool to develop district-based ESL curricula that prepared students to become proficient in English while also engaging with language needed to successfully engage with content area standards.

In response, principals at Elementary U. and R. Elementary supported teacher efforts by realigning schedules so ESL and general education teachers at one or two grade levels could teach together during one English Language Arts period of the day. At their annual evaluations, these teachers could point to [ACCESS 2.0](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/access/) and English Language Arts (ELA) test scores to show EL student improvement, but they reported needing more time to co-plan lessons and access additional professional development on co-teaching to maximize learning time. Early that summer, at the annual Principals’ Retreat, several other principals echoed similar sentiments among teachers in the district.

Conversations at the retreat led to additional discussions with the ELA and English Learner Education Curriculum Directors, who supported the idea of focusing teacher professional development the following year on collaborative practices for co-teaching in these areas at the elementary level. They considered this an opportunity to pilot the initiative, learn about the process, and potentially move towards scaling it to include middle and high school teachers in a year’s time.

Principals began by gathering information from their teachers about ways to modify the schedule to include common teaching and planning time. By the end of the summer a couple of elementary schools had committed to trying out a new schedule that would stack planning times on Thursdays to allow for a double common planning time for co-teaching ELA and ESL teachers and having paraprofessionals cover recess and lunch to offset lost planning time on Fridays.[[2]](#footnote-2) The schools modified schedules so ESL teachers could co-teach with at least one ELA teacher. Because the schools did not have enough ESL teachers to assign one per grade, this meant prioritizing co-planning opportunities at grades with the largest number of ELs. For example, at Elementary U. the largest number of ELs the following school year were in Kindergarten and second grade. Thus, the school modified the schedule so that the second-grade teacher and one of the ESL teachers would co-teach during the ELA period and share planning periods. The ESL teacher kept her separate time for ESL with second graders at another time of the day. Based on these considerations, Elementary U. planned the schedule for second grade as follows:

*Figure X: Elementary U. Modified Second Grade Schedule*

| **50 min periods** | **Monday** | **Tuesday** | **Wednesday** | **Thursday** | **Friday** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 8:15 – 9:05 | Math | Math | Math | Math | Math |
| 9:05 – 9:55 | Math | Math | Math | Math | Math |
| 9:55 – 10: 45 | ELA/R  (Co-teaching) | ELA/R  (Co-teaching) | ELA/R  (Co-teaching) | ELA/R  (Co-teaching) | ELA/R  (Co-teaching) |
| 10:45 – 11:35 | ELA/R Centers or  ESL (ELs) | ELA/R Centers or  ESL (ELs) | ELA/R Centers or  ESL (ELs) | ELA/R Centers or  ESL (ELs) | ELA/R Centers or  ESL (ELs) |
| 11:35 – 12:10 | Recess & Lunch | | | | |
| 12:10 – 1:00 | Intervention | Intervention | Intervention | Intervention | Intervention |
| 1:00 – 1:50 | Specials/Plan | Specials/Plan | Specials/Plan | Specials/Plan | Science/Social Studies |
| 1:50 – 2:40 | Science | Open Circle | Social Studies | Open Circle |

Curriculum directors also reached out to teachers with co-teaching experience to invite them to co-plan and deliver professional development that could serve as a foundation for other interested teachers.

After some research, the school leadership team decided to offer a two-day fall institute focused on co-teaching and other collaborative practices for ESL and ELA teachers at the beginning of the next school year.

The workshops would provide opportunities for additional teachers to learn about effective co-teaching models; co-planning protocols; the Massachusetts [Collaboration Tool](https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/Website/State%20Pages/Massachusetts/MA_Collaboration_Tool.pdf); ways to review, analyze and assess student work for language and content learning; methods for analyzing tasks and activities in the current ELA and ESL curricula to identify embedded language functions and demands; best practices for reflecting on delivered lessons; and time to develop some co-taught lessons for the next school year.[[3]](#footnote-3) The institute was open to any interested teacher across the district with hopes of gathering additional support for collaboration in other schools. Teachers who had committed to co-teaching the following year would also gather throughout the year during quarterly professional development days to reflect and share their learning, discuss recurring issues, and strategize ways to address student work and progress.

If these early steps prove to be successful, several other elementary schools will begin adopting similar formats. Principals, teachers and curriculum directors anticipate needing to reevaluate and revise the plan in the future, but acknowledge that this is a place to start. Curriculum directors would like to scale it up to the middle and high schools in the district eventually, adapting the model to fit the different structure of secondary schools.

1. “WIDA level” refers to the student’s English Proficiency Level as measured by the annual ACCESS test. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Adapted from Rosenberg, D., Daigneau, R., & Galvez, M. (2018) [Finding Time for Collaborative Planning](https://www.erstrategies.org/tap/finding_time_for_collaborative_planning). Education Resource Strategies. (Strategy #1, Sample Elementary schedule, p. 5) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Santos, M., Darling-Hammond, L. & Cheuk, T. [Teacher Development to Support English Language Learners in the Context of Common Core State Standards](http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/10-Santos%20LDH%20Teacher%20Development%20FINAL.pdf). Understanding Language Initiative, Stanford University School of Education. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)