Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

Teaming

Developed in the field by educators.

In the "Interesting Moments" protocol, the debriefing process became more of a shared activity -- both participants searching for some understanding, trying to create meaning. In this version, the participants also share the planning and implementation of the lesson(s) that is to be taught. Utilizing either a form of parallel teaching or a more seamless co-teaching, the participants are both "on" with the students. Both are observers; both are observed.

Pre-Observation Conference
This takes the form of a planning session. Issues of outcomes, goals, objectives, and assessment are discussed and the activity is planned. If the two participants will be co-teaching and one or both are unfamiliar with the art of teaching with a partner, special attention should be paid to the issue of who will do what and how they will interact when working with the students.

Observation
It is important that some form of observational notes are taken. In a co-teaching situation, some people carry a clipboard or notebook as they move around the classroom, taking time to note anything of interest. Others feel this distracts them (or their students) and prefer to write as soon as possible after the event. A third method would be to videotape the session and use the playback during the debriefing. *(Warning: the use of video needs to be considered carefully. Among other considerations, it creates the need for a longer debriefing period.)*

Debriefing
As with the "Interesting Moments" protocol, either participant begins by raising a point of interest, stating as clearly and as fully as possible what occurred. A conversation develops around the interest with both observer and observed attempting to sort out, "What was going on there?"

Note: In spite of research that extols the benefits of team teaching (as opposed to team planning), this pedagogy is a break with the cultural norm of isolation that exists in most schools. In spite of the fact that many who participate in long-term team teaching find it exhilarating and the best form of staff development, it is not often done.

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