Study of the literature on team teaching to understand the nature and demands of this innovative practice

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A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE ON TEAM TEACHING
TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND DEMANDS
OF THIS INNOVATIVE PRACTICE

by

Sister Grace Watson, C.S.C.

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Introduction

We live in an age when the invincible spirit of progress is evident everywhere. Any field you can think of will reveal tremendous change and progress in the past several decades. Our ventures into space disclose man's triumph over the elements. Ordinary items like food processing, non-wrinkle clothing, spray bottle anything, dial-a-matic everythings, transitorized and electronic devices of every variety, myriads of super highways and other architectural triumphs, new medicines, surgical techniques and sophisticated systems of destroying other human beings are also evidence of progress.

Oddly enough the pattern and routine of teachers' performance today is not tremendously different from teachers in 1800. Education should be the catalyst of all the elements of progress, yet, instructional techniques in education often remain static. Teachers in today's classrooms with few exceptions, are hampered by traditional goals, ambitions and methods.
In 1951 we heard this from Margaret Mead, noted anthropologist:

American children are growing up within the most rapidly changing cultures of which we have any record in the world, within a culture where for several generations, each generation's experience has differed sharply from the last, and in which the experience of the youngest child in a large family will be extraordinarily different from that of the first born. Mothers cannot look back to the experience of their mothers, nor even to that of their older sisters; young husbands and fathers have no guides to the behavior which they are assuming today. So long standing and so rapid have been those processes of change that expectation of change and anxiety about change have been built into our character as a people.1

The problems and opportunities that teachers face today are quite different from those of their predecessors. Anderson tells us:

The demands made by a rapidly changing and increasingly complex society have radically altered the teacher's role and the conditions under which that role is carried out. The prospective teacher finds that the concept of teaching he formed as a student and sometimes even the concept of teaching that informs his professional training is either obsolescent or obsolete.2

The knowledge explosion makes it increasingly difficult and unlikely that any one teacher can have a sufficient command of the overall curriculum in the self-contained classroom. This same difficulty is encountered


by the teacher of a single content field in the secondary school. This rate of knowledge explosion promises to increase not decrease. It has been estimated that man's accumulation of knowledge has doubled between 1960-1967. Man's volume of knowledge has also doubled in these previous times: 1750-1900, 1900-1950, 1950-1960.

The climate of the 60's and 70's has been very hospitable to basic educational reform, improvement and restructuring. The teacher's role is changing and forces are reshaping programs and procedures in the school. Educators realize that the only constant in our lives is change.

Team teaching has gained a wider and wider following during the past years. Combining the efforts of a group of teachers into a team to plan, prepare, present and evaluate instruction answers the need to redefine purpose and adjust procedure in conquering some of the ills of education.

We believe that team teaching, provided it meets certain criteria, offers a greater opportunity for achieving the objectives of elementary school education in a modern complex and interdependent society than any other organizational plan that we know of.  

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Statement of the Problem

The writer of this paper has been a primary teacher in the self-contained classroom for a number of years. Recently she has shown interest in the method of team teaching and is being given the opportunity to share in a team teaching situation in Grade One effective September, 1972.

The purpose of this study is to present, in concise form, after a survey of the literature, the findings of outstanding specialists in the field of reading on the subject of team teaching. Through this survey the writer hopes to gain a knowledge of the rationale and underlying principles of team teaching as well as the practical application of this method of staff utilization.

Scope and Limitation

This paper will provide the reader with an overview of the structural and organizational innovation known as team teaching. The discussion will be limited to these specific areas: rationale, roots in history, personnel, organization of a team, advantages, disadvantages and evaluation.

Summary

A new era demands a new kind of teacher, prepared in new ways for children who have not been here before.
A teacher's commitment to new plans for organizing instruction must be personal and lasting. To build strength in this commitment requires an in-depth survey of the entire field of team teaching since its inception in the middle 1950's.

It is hoped that the information accumulated will be helpful to all teachers but especially to those teachers who are about to undertake a team teaching assignment.

**Definition of Terms**

Teaching teams vary in size upon the function it is to serve and upon the specialists available. The success of a team depends upon the personal dynamics of each member. A number of definitions of team teaching have now appeared in print. For the purposes of this study, the following definitions as stated by Brownell and Harris are to be employed.

In essence, a **team** is an instructional unit within a school. This unit is a combination of 1) a distinct student group, 2) a small faculty group responsible for teaching the student group, and 3) certain persons who assist the teachers and students.⁴

Since members of the faculty and auxiliary personnel can represent different levels of talent and service, we need further to define these elements:

A team leader is a mature, experienced, licensed teacher of unusual talent and extensive training who has been elected or appointed to serve as the leader of a teaching team and whose major responsibilities are teaching and coordinating the team's efforts. He is paid a stipend, above his normal pay for this latter responsibility. Moreover, he receives time to plan and to coordinate team activities.

A team teacher is a fully licensed teacher who serves as a member of a teaching team.

An intern teacher is a beginning teacher not yet fully licensed, who is given a regular teaching assignment on the team, and who receives supervision both from the employing school district and the sponsoring college or university.

An auxiliary teacher is a licensed teacher who is called upon team request.

A student teacher is a college student assigned by a teacher education program to a school to observe and to do directed teaching under the supervision of a master teacher within that school.

A master teacher is an experienced, regularly licensed teacher who possesses considerable advance study, unusual knowledge, and great skill in teaching.

A teacher-aide is a non-certified person from the community who works with the team on a paid part-time basis, relieving the teachers of clerical and other routine work so that they may concentrate on instructional activities.

A community resource person is a talented individual, not ordinarily affiliated with the school, who can, under supervision of a teacher, assist in some specific aspect of the instructional program or who can head student study groups in his special area of competence.5

5 Ibid.
J. Lloyd Trump in defining team teaching states:

I prefer a relatively broad definition of team teaching. The term might apply to an arrangement whereby two or more teachers and their aides, in order to take advantage of their respective competencies, plan, instruct, and evaluate, in one or more subject areas, a group of elementary or secondary students equivalent in size to two or more conventional classes, making use of a variety of technical aids to teaching and learning in large-group instruction, small-group discussion and independent study. 6

Dr. Melvin P. Heller defines team teaching as:

... a cooperative effort of two or more teachers, with complementary academic strengths, who work on a regular and purposeful basis to plan, to prepare, to present, and to evaluate learning experiences. 7

6 J. Lloyd Trump, "What is Team Teaching?" Education, LXXXV, No. 6 (February, 1965), pp. 327-32.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Rationale

Educators today have opportunities and challenges that are unprecedented in history. Education is of special interest to both individual citizens and to public and private institutions. The only justifiable reason for adopting team teaching is the desire to improve the quality of education. This improvement can be made through instruction that results from better staff utilization. Let it be clearly understood that team teaching is only one of many possible innovations and answers, not the answer to all problems plaguing teachers, students, and administrators. The dynamics of our society does demand change. Johnson and Hunt state:

Team teaching is a valid idea. The pooling of time and talent, the opportunity for joint planning, the exchange of ideas, the mixture of different sets of talents to be applied with complete flexibility, and the opportunity to come closer to individualizing instruction support our contention that these are practical ways of improving instruction. Why, then, must we wait for a fool-proof package before attempting to profit from an obvious opportunity.¹

The empirical validity of team teaching is still being established in scores of American school systems.

Ohm suggests the following rationale for team teaching:

The word team suggests a type of working relationship among individuals that does not presently exist in most schools. The nature of this relationship requires some arbitrary definition if a useful distinction is to be made between teams and other forms of cooperative working relationships between members of the school staff. It is based on the assumption that one of the major functions of teaching is the control and direction of the necessary and sufficient variables that form or directly influence the teaching-learning process.

A team relationship occurs when a group of teachers and students as an organized unit, accept and carry out decision-making responsibilities for a set of instructional variables such as time, space, group size, group composition, teacher assignment and resource allocation. In addition to the variables normally under control of the teacher, the team unit permits delegation to the instructional team of decisions usually made by the principal and the use of variables not present in the smaller, single teacher class unit of organization. The value of team teaching will be determined by the extent to which team organization permits effective coordination of a larger number of variables important to the achievement of higher levels of teacher and student performance.²

An important aspect of a developmental plan for team teaching is a clear distinction between teaching and instruction. Ohm describes the distinction between the two:

Teaching may be defined as the face to face relationship between teacher and student characterized by conversation

or discourse which is directed toward the achievement of subject matter objectives and school goals. Teaching is one of the processes of instruction.

Instruction may be defined as the transmission and storage of knowledge and culture with or without the direct mediation of the teacher.³

Because of instructional technology, the instructional process does not always depend upon the face-to-face instruction between teacher and student. A team organized with this distinction between teaching and instruction in mind would have a broad scope designed to include all the instructional variables such as teachers, students, instructional media, non-teaching personnel and non-instructional tasks.

The most important aspects of a rationale for team teaching are criteria, goals, and policies. According to Ohm:

After an instructional team has been formed, it must have criterion goals to decide on productive combinations of staff, students, time, space and resources. The development of criterion goals, defined in behavioral terms, is essential to the control and the direction of the instructional variables for which the team is responsible and should be developed before an instructional team takes on the responsibility for a group of students.⁴

In addition, the team needs to develop a set of working policies and rules that will guide the planning process and resolve the inevitable disagreements. These should be in written form and subject to revision by the team members so that each teacher has some recourse when the operation of the unit demands too much conformity. In

³Ibid., pp. 1-2.
⁴Ibid., p. 2.
giving up some degree of individual autonomy for team conformity, team members need assurance of control over what is essentially a more demanding work situation.  

In most early reporting about team teaching, teachers and administrators were very enthusiastic. Others reported team teaching as a fad. Team teaching is still in its experimental stages. This trial period should produce much new data to be evaluated. Cunningham precisely describes the fact that:

All teachers cannot be effective team teachers but for those who are philosophically and psychologically tuned to working closely with competent colleagues, team teaching can be a stimulating and rewarding, even though demanding, experience. When team teachers have adequate time for joint planning, when school systems place a premium upon superior performance, teachers grouped into teams can make an important contribution.

There is nothing magic about team teaching. However, just making classes larger and grouping teachers will not produce more effective learning. Teachers and administrators need to understand fully what they are about when they venture into team teaching.

It would be unfortunate if the fundamental advantage of team teaching should somehow be lost through widespread but indiscriminate adoption of the practice. Considerable attention must be given to developing sound theoretical bases for team teaching. Some understanding of the improvement that can be expected in learning if team teaching is done effectively, is crucial to continued success.

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5Ibid., p. 3.

The roles of the principal and teacher in team teaching are a necessary part of any rationale for team teaching. "The principal must assume the same responsibilities in team teaching as he does in other areas of management, namely leadership." This leadership demands that he explore new ideas. This might demand personal research in the field to be able to assume the leadership role that is his in team teaching. More will be written about the principal under Personnel.

Johnson and Hunt tell us that the role of the teacher is the most sensitive of all the areas that is developed in establishing the setting for team teaching.

The role of the teacher in a sound team teaching program is one of hard work. Any teacher who believes his work load will automatically be reduced when he becomes involved in the program will be disillusioned. In order to succeed in team teaching, a teacher must have a genuine interest in the educational development of his pupils. Only then is he willing to give the time and effort which is necessary to build a strong program. He must be willing to share his good ideas with his colleagues and they with him. He must be willing to receive and use constructive criticism that will further improve his teaching. He must be willing to cooperate with his fellow teachers and to solve problems that arise on a non-emotional level. After experimenting he must be willing to admit to himself that some ideas work better than others, and that the same technique of teaching is not necessarily the best for all phases of all subjects. Any teacher who is affirmative in these qualities will be highly successful in the team teaching approach.

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7Johnson and Hunt, op. cit., p. 20.
8Ibid., p. 21.
Far reaching changes in education are taking place. These must continue at a rapid rate in the decades ahead. These changes should be qualitative in nature and should be brought about by the scientific application of knowledge about human behavior and by the expanded use of the myriad of technical resources of our society.

Roots in History

Early Cooperative Practices in Teaching

Early cooperative practices in teaching can be traced back to Plato who used large and small group instruction. His writings included such topics as course sequence, subject matter, curriculum and individual students. His aims of education, as found in the basis of his writings, were wisdom and discovery as opposed to information and indoctrination.9

Immediately following the revolutionary war, Cutler, Franklin, Jefferson and Washington stressed the need for alleviating the masses from illiteracy and ignorance to a position of culture and citizenship. Articles, pamphlets and books on the function of education in a democracy were flooding the market. The American Philosophical Society for Promoting Useful Knowledge offered a prize for the best system of liberal education and for a plan of comprehensive methods of instituting and conducting public schools on the principles of the most extensive utility.10

9 Johnson & Hunt, op. cit., p. 33.
10 Ibid., p. 33.
One method of instruction born of this motivation was the Lancasterian method of teaching. In this plan, one teacher, by using his students as assistants, was able to instruct several hundred children instead of the usual dozen which was maximum at that time. This plan authored by Joseph Lancaster and Andrew Bell did crumble because it was inefficient and inadequate. This method was imported from England to the United States in the first decade of the nineteenth century. More children could be handled in one school at a very moderate cost. More important is that this system also introduced visual aids such as wall charts, blackboards, and slates.\(^{11}\)

In 1880 a plan introduced by Preston W. Search in Pueblo, Colorado, eliminated the concept of nonpromotion, emphasized individual work, individual progress and called for the use of assistant teachers. Search also wanted to free teachers from routine functions, to join teachers in a federation for planning purposes, to build teacher-training functions into the very fabric of the school itself, to pay adequate salaries, to give teachers the opportunity to observe practices in better schools, or even better than this, association in the same school with co-workers who represent the best personnel and the best method.\(^{12}\)

\(^{11}\)Ibid., pp. 33-34.

John Kennedy, superintendent of the schools in Batavia, New York, proposed the Batavia Plan in 1898. Two teachers would be assigned to the same classroom, one to handle group recitations and the other to work with individual pupils. This plan survived about thirty years when it gave way to the trend of smaller classes.\(^\text{13}\)

From 1896 to 1903, John Dewey and his associates operated the Laboratory School of the University of Chicago. Dewey was among the first to argue for team teaching. Dewey's phrase was "cooperative social organization." He regarded the word "departmental" as unfortunate and preferred to speak of lines of activity carried on by persons with special aptitude, interest and skill in them. He did not support the belief that young children must be taught everything by one teacher.\(^\text{14}\)

Dr. Maria Montessori had a notable impact on American schools from 1911 to 1952. Montessori anticipated the idea of team teaching and in her discussion of preadolescents, indicated the need for professional competency well beyond that possessed by ordinary teachers. She advocated that children be grouped in such a way that large groups of children working independently could be

\(^{13}\)Johnson and Hunt, *Rx for Team Teaching*, pp. 33-34.

\(^{14}\)Anderson, *Teaching in a World of Change*, p. 27.
alternated with smaller groups engaged in group lessons and discussions.15

Wirt's Platoon School Plan, sometimes known as the work-study-play school, aimed to ensure proportionate emphasis on each of these three major aspects of the child's life. Pupils were divided into two platoons. Classes were scheduled so that half of the time was devoted to academic subjects in homerooms and the other half was spent in activities requiring special facilities or laboratories such as manual arts, physical education, art, and music taught by specialists. This may have been the beginning of differential grouping schemes presently being used in large and small grouping instruction and found in many teacher plans.16

In the Pueblo Plan, instituted in 1898, the school was organized on a multiple-track basis and was concerned with the problems of continuous, sequential learning and the adaptation of instruction to the abilities of individual pupils. Standards were established for each grade and tracks were developed which required different rates of progress depending on the abilities of the pupils. Able pupils

15 Ibid., p. 77.
16 Ibid., p. 78.
moved more rapidly and slower pupils spent an extended time at each grade level. 17

The Winnetka Plan and the Dalton Plan were both developed around 1920. In the Winnetka Plan, the curriculum was divided into two parts, "the common essentials" (the knowledge and skill needed by everyone, including most of the basic subjects) and "the group and creative activities" (literature, music, art, manual arts, physical education and projects in many subjects). In the common essentials program the pupils worked on individual assignments at their own rate and passed tests to measure whether or not their achievement met the standards established for the successive units of work. A pupil would progress to the next unit when he passed the standard. No specific standards were set for the group and creative activities. Homeroom placement of children was based on age, and social maturity, and children could easily be moved from one group to another as individual progress warranted. 18

Similarly the Dalton Plan placed emphasis upon individual effort and progress but it also placed great emphasis on group life. The academic subjects were taught

18 Ibid., p. 47.
largely on an individual basis, with each subject laid out in a series of related jobs known as "contracts", each of which required about a month of work. In contrast to the Winnetka Plan with its homeroom teachers, the Dalton Plan provided for specialized teachers and facilities, and it mingled age groups on a non-graded basis. The pupils had great freedom of choice of the units of work they undertook.19

One other early plan of grouping practices should be mentioned and that is the Cooperative Group Plan developed by James F. Hosic in the early 1930's. It appears to have had a close affinity with present team teaching activities but it disappeared all too quickly from the educational scene and left no known descendants. Its primary purpose was to provide for individual differences not only of pupils, but also of teachers, principals, and communities. Each teacher was responsible for only a part of the education and guidance of individual pupils and groups of pupils. Each teacher was a specialist in a group of subjects or activities, with a classroom designed for the specialty. Teachers, responsible for the same pupils, worked together as a group. One of the teachers was designated as group leader and was given

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19 Ibid., p. 48.
supervisory responsibility. Each teacher was expected to relate his work and the work of his pupils to the activities of the other teachers. The groups of teachers were ordinarily composed of three to six members. Each teacher met with each group for more than an hour but in the course of the day was expected to teach not more than 200 pupils. Student groups usually covered more than one grade so cross grade instruction and some degree of continuous pupil progress was possible. If the Cooperative Group Plan were in existence today, it would be called team teaching. It would even be considered an outstanding plan in terms of its carefully detailed planning and its clear objectives. It is clear that the plan came before its time. 20

Team Teaching 1954 to Present

The main thrust for team teaching came in 1959 when the committee on the Experimental Study of the Utilization of the Staff in the Secondary School (NASSP) began to sponsor experimentation which ultimately involved one hundred secondary schools throughout the nation. Team teaching, employment of teacher assistants and the use of technological devices in new and daring ways were several areas touched by these experiments.

20 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
The interest and curiosity of educators across the country were spurred by J. Lloyd Trump's booklets, *Images of the Future*, *New Directions to Quality Education*, and *New Horizons for Secondary School Teachers*, along with the NASSP film, "And No Bells Ring," the consultation service provided by staff members of the Committee on Staff Utilization and numerous reports and articles published in professional periodicals. Hundreds of local, state and national teacher and supervisory conferences eager to include staff utilization matters on their agendas provided additional impetus.

**Personnel**

**Principal**

"The role of the principal is crucial. The success of team teaching in a school depends in large part on the administrator's conviction of the values of this type of program. His responsibilities are extensive."[21]

The administrator is responsible for supporting and encouraging those involved in team teaching. In a school where not all of the teachers are involved in the innovative practice, it would be vital that the administrator give

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equal support and attention to those teachers. The support and encouragement should be directed toward the individual as a person, toward that person's values, attitudes and behaviors, and not to the organizational change per se.

The team organization will require more personal contact on the part of the administrator with both his faculty and the community.

He will need to spend more time helping teachers make personal adjustments to the intimacy of the team arrangement. Because scheduling tends to segment his staff, he must expend more effort creating a cohesive group to attack common problems. His skill as a leader will aid him as he visits teams in session, consults with teachers and experiments with flexible schedules. Questioning parents will require more of his time as they seek explanations and reassurances about school innovation.22

Communications between school, home and community need to remain open and constant. The general public deserves to be in on an educational innovation.

The administration should provide opportunities for teachers and other professional staff members to be involved in researching and discussing, the possible advantages and disadvantages of team teaching.

In an open climate, teachers should feel unconstrained in expressing their doubts, concerns, apprehensions and questions, and out of this exchange would evolve a growing

22 Ibid., p. 89.
understanding of their responsibilities. There is little
doubt that teachers are more willing to risk experimen-
tation when their doubts about it have been understood
and accepted by the administrator. They will have been
freed from the fear of making mistakes.

A principal needs the lion's share of flexibility
to operate in the new environment created in a team teaching
school as he works with the professional and non-professional
members of his staff in their new roles. He works to
develop an improved curriculum pattern using different
teaching techniques and better grouping procedures. Bair
and Woodward list the following major tasks a principal
performs:

He (1) manages and coordinates the school; (2) serves
as an active member of the superintendent's cabinet;
(3) serves as chairman of the school's administrative
cabinet and coordinates the efforts of the team leaders
and senior teachers in the development and implementa-
tion of the school's instructional program; (4) develops
programs for the improvement of all the supervisory
techniques of the team leaders and senior teachers and
instructs the teachers of teachers in the process of
教学 and learning; (5) develops in cooperation with
the superintendent's office and his leadership personnel
an orientation program for professional and non-certified
members of the staff, pupils, parents and citizens; (6)
works with parents to keep them informed and to seek
their assistance in carrying out the aims of the school;
(7) keeps the superintendent's office informed of the
progress of his school; (8) shares ideas with the pro-
fession through speaking and writing; (9) informs the
administrative officers of the needs of his school for
supplies, equipment, space and personnel to enable the
staff to continuously work for improved instruction; (10)
develops and administers the annual budget.23

23Medill Bair and Richard G. Woodward, Team Teaching
in Action (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1964), pp. 67-
68.
The fact that teachers must leave teaching and enter the supervisory or administrative ranks, if they want to obtain increased responsibility, higher salaries and professional recognition has been widely deplored. In recent years attention has turned to efforts to create new positions and new ranks within teaching. These new plans have aimed at simultaneously increasing efficiency in the utilization of the professional teaching force and proving more attractive careers and salary incentives.

**Team Leader**

The most formal version of team teaching can be depicted graphically by means of a pyramid with the team leader at the apex. The pyramid represents the hierarchical pattern of team organization in which there are two or more levels of prestige and responsibility. This pattern of organization would include the team leader, senior teacher, specialist teacher, fully qualified teachers, interns, teacher aides and clerical aides.  

The team leader is selected for the role because he has (1) above-average if not superior talents as a classroom teacher; (2) a particular teaching strength (such as unusual competence in teaching elementary school mathematics) developed through experience and advanced training; (3) unusual ability in curriculum planning, the analysis of instructional problems and procedures, the diagnosis

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and evaluation of pupil behavior and other dimensions of the "hypotenuse" concept developed in chapter two; (4) the skills usually associated with group leadership, such as sound understanding of group dynamics; and (5) a willingness to carry the sometimes burdensome responsibilities associated with the leader's role.  

The team leader spends the major portion of his day teaching. He shares planning, observing and evaluating the team members' lessons. He assumes many of the administrative duties once performed by the principal. The planning and evaluating sessions are his most important activities. Advocates of this hierarchical structure contend that it should bring the additional compensation of $1,000 because more is demanded emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

**Senior Teacher**

The senior teacher is responsible for instruction within the team in an area of the curriculum in which he has a special competence. He takes leadership for overall planning in this area and serves as resource person to other teachers in the team. He plans with the team leader and with members of the team. He observes and assists his teammates in this area of specialization. He is responsible for teaching groups of varying sizes in most subjects during most of each day. A salary supplement

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of perhaps half that paid to the team leader is generally provided as an incentive and as recognition of the prestige and responsibility of the role. 26

Teacher

The teachers in the team plan together and individually for the instruction of children in group sizes varying from one child to a large segment of the team, depending on the purpose of the lesson. They teach most subjects in the curriculum and work with children during most of the day. According to Bair and Woodward:

A distinguishing characteristic of a teacher entering the team teaching school is his willingness to cooperate on an hour-by-hour basis with other members of the profession. This is a major factor in determining who may or may not be a good team teacher. Further, a teacher must want to teach in a team teaching school. 27

With the use of teacher aides, a flexible schedule and clerical aides, team teachers have time when they can plan individually or collectively. They do not lose their classroom autonomy. Each teacher is free to use those techniques and methods with which he has the most success. Improved teaching is a result of standing the test of criticism and being judged by fellow teachers.


27 Ibid., pp. 73-74.
Heller, in discussing qualities of team members, emphasized these: pliability, creativity, leadership, cooperation and willingness to change. 28

Special Teacher

Special teachers in art, music, physical education and the allied arts may work regularly with a team in a school. This provides a block of time for planning, whether it be a team or individual planning session. Each school differs on the amount of time scheduled with special teachers.

Interns

The intern is a college graduate completing additional requirements for acceptance into the teaching profession. He does contribute to the team as a teacher, but also requires special attention, supervision and training by the professional members of the team, as well as the sponsoring college or university. He is an avenue for the team to the resources of the college. 29


Teacher Aides

A teacher aide is a non-certified person from the community who works with the team on a paid, part-time or full-time basis, relieving the teachers of clerical and other routine work so that they may concentrate on instructional activities. Teacher aides must demonstrate ability to work satisfactorily with children. Bair and Woodward state:

Providing teacher aide service to teams enables teachers to have more time for their primary tasks. Thus, it improves the quality, quantity and variety of learning by each pupil, while at the same time assuring that the necessary routines are performed efficiently under teacher guidance by trained, competent, responsible personnel. 30

Clerical Aides

Under the overall direction of the team leader, the clerical aide acts as secretarial and clerical assistant to the team. This person should have proficiency as a typist, clerical ability, great accuracy and familiarity with general office procedure. This position requires an adult with high professional ethics because of the confidential nature of many of the materials to be handled. Bair and Woodward list the following major tasks of clerical aides:

A clerical aide (1) types letters, "masters", worksheets, tests, and requisitions; (2) produces accurate

30 Bair and Woodward, Team Teaching in Action, p. 78.
copy of team meetings; (3) makes clerical entries on pupil records at the teacher's dictation; (4) transfers material from one school to another; (5) files; (6) serves as team receptionist for parents; (7) serves as team receptionist for general visitors; (8) completes routine administrative reports; (9) maintains attendance registers.31

A successful team teaching operation can open new doors for the career teacher and offer new opportunities of advancement without leaving the teaching profession.

Organization of a Team

"Varying circumstances in schools, situations with differing needs and differing professional resources make it unwise to suggest any universal approach to team teaching."32 In other words, what makes sense for one school's program may not be realistic for another school. Each school must assess the talents of its staff members in the light of its own philosophy and over-all objectives. "The school's enrollment, the quality of its educational leadership and the rational use of human and material resources—all will influence the form of team teaching shaped for the school."33

31 Ibid., p. 80.


33 Ibid., p. 30.
The following guides are offered to teachers and administrators who are interested in beginning a team teaching effort by Melvin P. Heller. He cautions the reader that the use of guides could be a following of the letter and not the spirit of the innovation. "One can learn to be a team teacher, of course, but the real success in team teaching and team learning occurs when students and teachers pursue an intellectual interest because they must."34

1. Gain administrative support. Accentuate the positive in your discussions.

2. Start by looking for someone on the staff with whom you can work cooperatively and effectively. This someone may be a teacher of the same subject or grade level, or he may be someone on another level or subject area. This teacher should be interested in experimentation and change.

3. Begin with those subjects which have the best possibilities for "blending". What is best often depends upon one's viewpoint. American literature and American history might not be a better blend than math and art in some schools.

4. Discuss the possibilities of sharing ideas, plans, lessons, and testing procedures with this partner. These discussions will iron out obvious problem areas.

5. If no headway is made, look for someone else to work with and start again.

6. After preliminary discussions are held and cooperation seems to be not only possible, but also desired, discuss the undertaking with your administrator.

7. Work cooperatively with the administration to provide similar schedules for the team teaching members.

8. Take time to have an orientation program which will cover at least these topics:

   a. Statements of school philosophy as they affect curriculum and methodology.
   b. Meaning of team.
   c. Nature and techniques of large-groups, small-groups, and individual study.
   d. Importance of details for team efficiency.
   e. Opportunities for teacher creativity.
   f. Differentiation of lectures, assignments, tests, and marks according to pupil ability.
   g. Use of audiovisual aids in large-group, small-group, and individual study.
   h. Role of guidance department, librarian, and "special" teachers.

The above topics can be treated for orientation purposes in approximately one week. To provide an example of "learn-by-doing," the topics can be presented in a large-group setting with opportunities for small-group discussions following each presentation.

The large-group presentations can incorporate those desirable features of lecture-demonstration techniques which are to be the model for the staff.

The small-group discussions can serve as object lessons in the importance of preparation prior to discussions, roles of participants, group dynamics, and other considerations.

Each team of teachers should be given time daily during the orientation program for lesson planning, development of visual aids, research, group meetings, and individual conferences. This involvement can serve as an example of individual study.
9. Plan a sample lesson showing which points are to be taught through large-group presentation, small-group discussions, and individual study pursuits.

10. Hold frequent meetings to evaluate progress.
   a. Allow teachers to make mistakes without fear of retribution.
   b. Encourage creative and original contributions from teachers.
   c. Encourage teachers to be self-critical, tempered by professional ethics.
   d. Make a sincere effort to accept the sound advice offered for the sake of improvement.
   e. Don't evaluate elusive outcomes too soon.
   f. Consider a variety of aspects to evaluate:
      1) Achievement of pupils.
      2) Amount and depth of subject matter covered.
      3) Opportunities for enrichment and correlation of subjects.
      4) Use of audiovisual aids.
      5) Use of library materials.
      6) Participation of pupils in discussion.
      7) Development of pupil self-responsibility.
      8) In-service advantages for teachers.

11. Expand the team to include a third member whose academic strengths complement those of the other team members.

12. Utilize the strengths of the team members. Do not merely "take turns".

13. Criticize freely, openly, honestly, constructively, and professionally.

14. Encourage administration to visit classes to criticize professionally and to improve the schedule.

15. Invite the guidance personnel to participate in the development of lessons. Seek their suggestions concerning grouping of students, group dynamics techniques, and content emphases.

17. Keep communications clear and open.

18. Take the necessary steps to refine and to improve the team approach. 35

Advantages of Team Teaching

The intellectual and social milieu of any classroom should be one in which the child can feel a sense of worth as a successful, capable human being. He will be encouraged to develop creatively as a thinker, a feeler, and a doer. Objectives are designed for the total child and include cognitive, affective and effective dimensions.

If team teaching is organized properly and carefully it can produce efficiency and effectiveness and obtain variety and flexibility in the school program. There is really no limit to the possibilities of team teaching, and perhaps this is the greatest advantage. It creates an experimental mood and teaching becomes a way of manipulating a variety of sources for learning. In short, it does what we all hope sound education should do and that is encourage the student to assume the responsibility for his own education. 36

Finley, although admitting to the fact that there are disadvantages to team teaching, especially if the wrong people get together, or if the participants do not particularly want to be on the team, does list the following advantages:


1. The team approach offers the combined thinking of more than one person.

2. The team approach makes possible the "break in" of a neophyte teacher as beginning teachers can be teamed with experienced teachers.

3. The team makes it possible for more and better planning for the teaching of children. Additional planning time for the members of the team becomes available while one teacher of the team is conducting a large group listening or watching session. This type of program also makes it possible for the non-teaching teachers at this time to work with other small groups or individuals.

4. The team enables each child to "sit at the feet" of both the good and the poor teacher. (Let's face it—we do have some poor teachers, and sometimes twenty-five youngsters must endure them for a whole year.)

5. The team approach encourages ungradedness in the elementary school. (This is taken to be good.)

6. The team approach changes the outlook on recruitment of teachers in that, instead of looking for a fifth-grade teacher, we now seek a person who has certain qualities that will enhance the team. Diverse personalities can be blended together on a team for the advantage of students.

7. The team effect on the child psychologically appears to be that many teachers are helping with his education. This is rather contrary to the belief that the child usually becomes disturbed, especially at the primary level with no one mother hen. In a school in Ohio where we had a team teaching approach in an ungraded primary building without interior walls, an interesting thing happened. The four teachers working with the 112 primary children in a "barn" type building were also somewhat worried about little Henry not knowing which teacher was his. One day during recess, Henry came running into the small building yelling, "Miss X, Miss Y, Miss Z, Miss W, Willie cut his knee." Now I admit that this little guy might have been so confused that he didn't know whom to call, but I
prefer to believe that he associated himself posi-
tively with all four. 37

A teacher may honestly wonder if all the extra time,
effort, give and take required by team teaching will
balance out with advantages in her favor. Hanslovsky,
Mayer and Wagner suggest these advantages after a brief
summing up of all pertinent data:

1. Planning for actual instruction is increased and
improvement of instruction results.

2. The number of times a presentation must be made
decreases. Utilization of the total group can be
made to show a movie or give a presentation once
to all the team students. In essence, three or
four separate classes can be exposed to material
at the same time.

3. Allowance is made for better utilization of
"specialists", consultants, and general resource
persons.

4. Curriculum must be re-evaluated constantly in light
of each new goal.

5. Opportunities for flexibility are insured.

6. Expanded insights in the viewpoints and beliefs
of others usually result.

7. The team framework provides an exciting way to
teach, to innovate and to experiment with dif-
ferent methods, class sizes, groupings and time
usage.

8. Teacher strengths are utilized as each teaches his
speciality.

9. Teachers can share ideas and polish materials before
they are presented to students.

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37 Robert Finley, "How Team Teaching Fits into the
Elementary School," in Team Teaching in Action, pp. 54-55.
10. Provision can be made for time to talk shop: about children and their problems and what you can do about them; about exciting ways of presenting new information; about stimulating types of activities and assignments that are tantalizing to students.

11. Teachers gain many new techniques, approaches, etc., from watching other team teachers work with the same students under the same basic conditions.

12. Teachers are forced to evaluate what they are teaching, and why they are teaching it.

13. Shared planning helps when burdens and pressures seem unreal.

14. Support is present for the neophyte and these new teachers can more quickly become a part of the school.

15. The invaluable assistance of respected co-workers in becoming a better teacher insures growth.

16. Talents develop that teachers never dreamed they had. 38

Chamberlain would support, add to and perhaps overlap the foregoing advantages for the teaching staff with his listing:

1. Differentiates but does not detract from teacher role.

2. Encourages able teachers to remain in the classroom.

3. Increases opportunity for personal recognition.

4. Makes more effective use of the professional talents and interests of staff members.

5. Relieves teachers of routine tasks, through the use of aides.

6. Enables teachers to share information and ideas which help solve problems and improve their professional background.

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7. Encourages each member to do his very best.
8. Results in lower pupil-staff ratio.
9. Reduces the adverse results of teacher absence.
10. Neutralizes the effect of the poor teacher.
11. Provides in-service education opportunities.\textsuperscript{39}

Since we do not live in a vacuum, or think in a vacuum, then why should we teach in a vacuum. We should reap the benefits of two, three, four or more excellent, competent professionals who can work together for the purpose of improving teaching and learning for themselves and for their students.

**Disadvantages of Team Teaching**

We know that team teaching as used today is still not the perfect instrument for learning; it needs to be sharpened, and refined. A review of the disadvantages of team teaching should not in anyway prove that this approach to learning is ineffective but rather, point to the structural flaws which act as barriers to sound learning.

Ohm has found these same recurring themes as disadvantages of team teaching:

1. Personnel selection is difficult and there are no criteria to serve as a standard.

2. Coordination within the team could have been improved if leadership responsibilities had been designated.

3. Lecturing was overdone in the program.

4. Team teaching calls for facilities which are not available in the present school plan.

5. Independent study was not properly exploited.

6. Most of the learning became dependent on the "lecture-listen" instruction.

7. The personnel problems became overwhelming and the scheduling became too complicated.

8. Friction developed among team members due to lack of time to plan properly.

9. Team teaching with its so-called "flexible scheduling" builds rigidity into the master program.

10. Students have less freedom of choice with both teachers and courses.

11. If the team continues longer than one school year, dropouts cannot be easily replaced to maintain the team.

12. There is a lack of appropriate measuring devices and lack of clear-cut, educational objectives, particularly in the affective domain (interests, attitudes, values, appreciations).

13. Some students dislike being in large classes, and many do not want to accept, and often do not, the increased responsibility which is placed on the pupil in large team teaching classes.

14. Students tend to be less attentive in large lecture classes.
15. Limited curriculum materials; we have had to make our own the "slow, hard way."

16. We feel that team teaching does not meet the emotional needs of many of our pupils.

17. We found a lack of flexibility due to the pressure to conform to group testing.

18. It took the instructor a longer period of time to get to know his students, and many instructors performed on a "large-group" basis overlooking individual needs. Teaching was done en masse.

In the interest of providing the reader with both the pros and cons of team teaching, Chamberlain suggests the following disadvantages.

1. Agreement on the evaluation of individual students.

2. Arranging time for planning, instructional development, and study during the day.

3. Increased pressure on students resulting from constant upgrading of instruction.

4. Conflicts resulting from mixing people of different teaching styles.

5. Providing facilities capable of furnishing the flexibility needed.

6. Replacing the teachers who leave the team.

7. Requests for additional audio-visual materials and equipment resulting from team teaching organization.

8. Selection of appropriate action regarding student misbehavior.

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9. Teacher insecurity, dread of the unfamiliar that often accompanies beginning team teaching.

10. The need for a designated leader.

11. The question of more pay for team leaders.

12. Danger of pupil detachment with the use of large groups.

13. Tendency to restrict the individual teacher's freedom of action. 41

For a team to be successful there must be a good deal of communication, collaboration and cooperation. Heller suggests the following disadvantages which are not insurmountable if real teamwork is applied:

a) Failure to communicate clearly, freely and openly.

b) Lack of attention paid to details and follow-up activities.

c) Possibility that teachers may idle away time.

d) Possibility that teachers may not evaluate each other on a professional basis.

e) Possibility that a prima donna may emerge. 42

In initiating a team teaching approach to education the fears most often expressed were that children would feel lonely or lost in such big groups, they would be

41Chamberlain, Team Teaching--Organization and Administration, p. 11.

42Heller, Team Teaching: A Rationale, p. 34.
confused by the continual changing of rooms and teachers and that they would have no one person to relate to. Schedule conflicts and outside demands would lead to insufficient time and opportunity for communal planning and evaluating. When carried to an extreme this approach might lead to a kind of departmentalization. One teacher may become identified as the math teacher, another as the English teacher. Many youngsters may be too immature to profit from the independent study phase of the team teaching approach.

**Evaluation**

Development of team teaching should proceed through four phases: design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination. These are interrelated. The purpose of the first two phases is to prepare the plan and to put it into action up to the point where it can be evaluated. The evaluation phase should relate outcomes of the plan in different school settings and if favorable the last phase, dissemination, is to foster the adoption of the plan. Heathers warns us:

Currently, the development of team teaching is not following this four-phase progression. In many projects the design, implementation, and evaluation phases are being telescoped into one. The dissemination of team teaching is proceeding at a rapid pace even though the plans being employed are incompletely designed, have never been successfully implemented, and have not been properly evaluated. . . . It is our contention
that the development of team teaching is being impeded by a general failure to apply appropriate research strategies within each of the four phases.\textsuperscript{43}

Educators at one time or another have employed five bases for evaluating a team teaching plan. Heathers lists and describes these five bases as follows:

1. A team teaching plan may be evaluated simply by deciding that it introduced certain desired features into the school's program. Many educators appear to believe that a sufficient reason for adopting a team teaching plan is that it provides for increased cooperation among teachers, or frees teachers from non-professional chores, or provides for flexible grouping.

2. An important basis for evaluating a plan is whether or not it is workable in given types of school situations. Regardless of its merits in theory, a plan that cannot be implemented successfully, or that is excessively difficult to implement, is not a good plan. Often educators decide whether or not to adopt an organizational plan on the basis of how difficult or costly it is to install and operate, without waiting for evidence as to whether its outcomes justify the burdens of implementing it. Determining a plan's workability is a purpose of the implementation phase.

3. Some leaders of educational reform evaluate organizational plans by the extent to which they stimulate a climate of change in the schools. This may seem a trivial basis for evaluating a plan, but it has been advocated by educators who believe that it is important for America's schools to break out of established ways and to try new approaches to instruction. "Focus on change" is indeed a slogan of today's reform movement in education. School systems that introduce team teaching usually find themselves

reexamining almost every aspect of the educational program and at least contemplating changes in educational goals, curricula, grouping procedures, uses of space and equipment, and teacher education.

4. Almost everyone would agree that a definitive evaluation of a team teaching plan requires measuring its outcomes. Most of the formal evaluation studies have compared outcomes of team teaching with outcomes of traditional organizational plans, usually the self-contained classroom in the elementary school or the conventional departmentalized plan in the junior and senior high schools. The majority of these studies have used as criteria of outcome, the attitudes of students, parents, and teachers toward the plans, measures of students' achievements in the plans being compared, and measures of students' personal-social adjustment in the two plans.

5. There is a major weakness in evaluating a team teaching plan by comparing its outcomes with those obtained in another organizational plan; a comparative study does not tell how well team teaching accomplishes any given outcome. Educators should not be satisfied to learn that team teaching accomplishes a given outcome as well as a traditional plan, or even that it accomplishes that outcome somewhat better. Many educational outcomes are accomplished poorly at present. The critical question is: How well does team teaching accomplish the essential objectives of the educational program? In order to answer this question, standards must be set and the outcomes of team teaching judged against these standards. It is remarkable how seldom educators employ well-defined standards in evaluating educational innovations.44

Reviewing published reports on team teaching projects can be a frustrating experience. Specific findings are presented only in a few reports, and these do not give sufficient details about research methods. An adequate

44Ibid., pp. 316-317.
appraisal of the studies is difficult and in many instances impossible. The summary of findings in a review by Cunningham occupies less than a page.45

One major purpose of most team teaching projects is to improve the quality of instruction. Judging from published reports it appears that this purpose has not yet been achieved. Drummond reached this conclusion in 1961 and it still holds true: "Students do as well or perhaps a little better on standardized tests when taught by teaching teams of the various types described."46 Drummond points out that differences found between team teaching and a conventional plan or organization are not statistically significant.

Heathers selected the Norwalk Plan of Team Teaching Reports as examples in his review of research studies in team teaching because they provide more data on student achievement than other reports and because they illustrate some recurrent problems of research design and data interpretation. He summarizes and interprets the data as follows:


A study of student achievement in the Norwalk Plan provides representative findings on the outcomes of team teaching in the elementary school. The report for the second year of the plan at Norwalk, 1959-1960, has seven three-teacher teams, each having a group of 75-90 students from one of Grades Two to Six. 47 Four of the seven teams taught the same groups as in 1958-1959 but at the next higher grade level. For these groups, progress was reported for the two-year span. No control groups were employed in the data analysis. Grade equivalent gains in Stanford Achievement Tests were computed for each team and were compared with gains according to national norms for comparable periods of schooling. Out of forty-eight instances of comparing team teaching results with national norms, gains with team teaching equaled or exceeded the norms in thirty-nine instances. The fault with this analysis is that it is not based on Norwalk norms for the self-contained classroom. It is to be expected that Norwalk would exceed the national norms under any plan of organization because this community is well above the average in socioeconomic level, education of parents and provisions for schooling. We learn very little about the merits of team teaching when we are told that with team teaching Norwalk still exceeds the national norms in learning progress.

In a report on the third year of the Norwalk Plan (1960-1961), achievement test results are evaluated with the use of control groups. 48 Control groups were set up by the matched-pairs technique on the basis of grade level and I.Q. No consistent superiority was found for either team teaching or the self-contained classroom. Out of 194 comparisons involving


different subtests and different groups of students, ninety favored team teaching while 114 favored the self-contained classroom. Few of the comparisons yielded statistically significant differences. Team teaching showed to advantage particularly in the areas of reading and spelling. The self-contained classroom held the advantage in language and in arithmetic skills and problem solving. In a special spelling test, team teaching groups held a marked advantage in Grade Five, while groups in the self-contained classroom did at least as well as team teaching groups in Grade Six. These divergent results suggest that the implementation of team teaching was uneven from subject to subject and from grade to grade. The absence of data on how the plans under comparison were implemented from group to group prevents determining the correctness of such an interpretation. While it appears that the control groups in this study were carefully drawn, it would have been desirable for the report to include tabular data on how well the experimental and control groups were matched in age, I.Q., socioeconomic level and teacher competencies.49

Research studies have in no instance found evidence that team teaching harms the personal-social adjustment of students. Some studies have found that, with some indicators of adjustment, team teaching holds a distinct advantage over conventional organizational plans. Nearly all of the published data on student adjustment are from elementary schools. Heathers tells us:

A report on the first two years of the project at Norwalk summarizes students' attitudes toward team teaching.50. This is one approach to measuring student adjustment if one assumes that positive or negative attitudes toward a plan are indicators of adjustment.

49 Heathers, "Research on Team Teaching" in Team Teaching, pp. 327-328.

Overall, approximately four students out of five expressed a favorable attitude toward having more than one teacher, studying in more than one room, and being a member of a group that was larger than a regular class. About four out of five felt that they had gotten to know one teacher as well as in a regular class. Nearly nine out of ten felt that they made as many or more friends under team teaching as when they were in regular class. Expressed attitudes of students showed no systematic differences from one grade to another over the range of Grades two to six.

A report on the Norwalk Plan compares scores on the California Aspects of Personality test for students under team teaching who were tested in the spring of 1960, and the spring of 1961. Statistically significant gains (Chi-Square test) were found with both boys and girls in Personal Adjustment and in Total Adjustment, but not in Social Adjustment. Gains for the boys were significant at the .05 level while those for the girls were significant at the .01 level. A weakness of this study was that no control groups were used, and it is not possible to be sure that the gains were not a function of age changes in adjustment scores. Also, different forms of the test were used in the two testings and the differences found may have been a function of differences in the two forms (A and B).

In theory, at least, team teaching has certain advantages over the self-contained classroom with respect to student adjustment. A student who might fail to get along with his teacher in the self-contained classroom can select an identification figure from among several members of a team.

The majority of parents having children in team teaching projects are in favor of the team approach if

51The Norwalk Plan of Team Teaching: Third Report, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

one can rely on the few studies of parents' attitudes that have been reported in the literature. At Oceano, California, seventy-eight percent of the parents of fourth graders who returned anonymous questionnaires indicated that they would prefer team teaching for their children the following year, ten percent were uncertain, and twelve percent were opposed.53

After one year of team teaching at Norwalk, Connecticut, ninety percent of the parents of children in Grades Two and Five in the plan responded to an attitude questionnaire.54 Favorable attitudes toward the team approach were expressed by seventy-eight percent of the parents of the second graders and by seventy-two percent of the parents of fifth graders. Overall, sixty-three percent favored having their children under team teaching the following year, nineteen percent were uncertain, and eighteen percent were opposed. Sixty percent felt that their children had made more acquaintances or friends under team teaching, and only four percent felt they had made fewer.


Heathers suggests that the findings reported are not sufficiently specific or detailed to indicate what features of team teaching were chiefly responsible for the parents' attitudes. The fact that a third or more of the parents expressed uncertain or unfavorable attitudes toward team teaching poses problems of program improvement and parent education.

Heathers states the following in regard to teachers' attitudes about team plans:

The literature contains very little information about teachers' attitudes concerning team teaching. Numerous articles report that most team members are favorable toward team teaching after experience with it. This is not surprising in view of the fact that most teachers in today's projects are volunteers.

At the end of the first year of the Oceano, California, elementary school project, recorded interview protocols were obtained on the attitudes of the seven teachers in three teams. These teachers were volunteers who were chosen for their personal-social characteristics and for the curricular areas in which they wished to specialize. Four of the seven were reported as fully in favor of continuing in the project, while three wanted to try again if certain conditions were met.

56 Ibid., p. 337.
57 Adams, op. cit., p. 211.
changes were made in flexible grouping and if soundproof walls were provided.

The following summary of the Norwalk Plan and teachers' attitudes is given by Heathers:

The Norwalk report includes findings of a questionnaire study comparing attitudes of teachers in the system who were "close" to the project with those of teachers who were not. Closeness referred either to being in a school having some team teaching or to having visited and studied team teaching. In the spring of 1959, when four teams were in operation in the district's elementary schools, fifty percent of the teachers in the system who were close to the project favored team teaching, while twenty-four percent of those not close favored it. In the spring of 1960, forty-four percent of those close to the project were favorable, while twenty-eight percent of those not close were favorable. Each year, about one-fourth of the teachers close to the project were not in favor of team teaching, as compared with one-third of those teachers who were not close. The popularity of team teaching at Norwalk, after three years of the project reached the point where 140 teachers wished to enter the program. During the fourth year, two entire elementary schools were organized for team teaching, partly because many teachers were willing to enter the program.58

According to Drummond, practices in team teaching are assessed by utilizing three types of data: achievement as measured by standardized or by locally-constructed tests, teacher opinions (sometimes buttressed by student and parent opinions), and per pupil costs. He states:

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The data collected and reported generally indicate:
(a) Students do as well or perhaps a little better on standardized tests when taught by teaching teams of the various types described. Usually the obtained differences are not significant when fairly sophisticated statistical measures are employed to analyze the data. (b) Teachers, generally, are willing to continue the team approach although there are numerous indications that not all teachers make good team members. . . . (c) Students and their parents generally favor what has been tried. Many learners are at first skeptical or negative, but as teachers gain confidence and competence in their changed roles, reports from them indicate positive support for the team approach. (d) Costs rise slightly. Many of these additional costs have been the result of improved instructional resources—books, films, overhead projectors, and the like.\(^59\)

Drummond suggests that experimentation should be continued. Much more sophisticated research designs should be used, so that variables in the situations can be more carefully controlled.\(^60\) While team teaching is being tested more carefully, some school systems should also be testing other approaches to improvement of learning.

Finally, in improving research, Heathers warns:

Virtually no research studies have been reported that focus on the design, implementation, or dissemination of team plans. The studies evaluating outcomes have usually been superficial and poorly designed.\(^61\)

Heathers suggests that in order to improve this research we require everyone seeking a doctorate in education to receive specific training in conducting "developmental and

\(^{59}\)Drummond, "Team Teaching: An Assessment," p. 162.

\(^{60}\)Ibid., p. 165.

\(^{61}\)Heathers, "Research on Team Teaching" in Team Teaching, p. 341.
evaluative research". Or we could lure researchers from other fields into education. Another necessary step is to acquaint administrators with the nature and procedures of research in education. Every school system should hire at least one specialist in research technique to design and conduct change.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

James B. Conant, who is not easily swayed by current fashion in education, has written the following about elementary education:

There is without doubt a ferment among educators with respect to the conduct of elementary education. The long-standing notion of a self-contained classroom of thirty pupils taught by one teacher is giving way to alternative proposals. One of these proposals is team teaching, which, as we have seen, has advantages in orienting new teachers.

If the idea of team teaching becomes widely accepted—many elementary school principals predict that it will—there will be places in classrooms for a wide range of instructional talent.

How such schemes will work out over the years in practice remains to be seen, but team teaching seems to many the answer to the question of how to attract more of the ablest college students into elementary school teaching. The possibility of a teacher's having an opportunity to take advantage of her special field of interest is exciting.¹

Team teaching, a new pattern of school organization, which emerged in American education in 1954, has rapidly

assumed the dimensions of a major educational movement. Starting with a few pilot projects in 1956 and 1957, the movement has now spread to several hundred communities distributed widely throughout the country. Plans under development suggest increasingly rapid growth. A number of major universities are participating actively in the development of team teaching and there is a high level of professional interest, both pro and con, that has already been expressed in this study. Meetings at the local, state and national level have been organized in order to express a description and analysis of team teaching. In some communities programs have progressed far beyond the pilot stage and include the reorganization of entire schools, the spread of teams throughout the school system, and even the construction of school buildings designed to meet the requirements of the new program. The Fund for the Advancement of Education, along with local school boards have allocated substantial sums of money for these developments.

Much of the professional interest in team teaching has been stimulated by the Committee on Staff Utilization, appointed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals and supported by the Fund for the Advancement of Education. Its chief spokesman and secretary is Dr. J. Lloyd Trump. Since 1958, this Committee has issued extensive reports of projects which it has sponsored.
Team teaching has not been limited to any one level of public education. It occurs at the elementary, junior high and high school levels. Both suburban and urban schools have been involved.

Is team teaching as diverse as the literature suggests or are there basic similarities which can be identified?

Shaplin tells us:

When comparing different team teaching projects, one is impressed by their great diversity in both methods of organization and aims. Their common properties are difficult to identify, both because each program tends to define itself in very general and, at the same time, exclusive terms and because no clearly recognizable group of projects seem to have the same objectives. Since it is equally difficult to point to one or two projects and say that they are the models for the typical or real team teaching, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that there are as many different types of team teaching as there are different school systems that have undertaken projects.²

Among teaching teams, the most obvious and important similarity, implied by the name itself, is that teachers are brought into a close working relationship for the joint instruction of the same group of students. This involves a change in the prevailing personnel structure of most schools. Prior to team teaching, the assignment of instructional tasks and student groupings were matters of administrative decision; with team teaching these matters become the joint responsibility of the members of the team. Implicit, if not explicit, in this working relationship is the assumption that the team teachers will share instructional tasks and goals; plan together; assign appropriate tasks to individual team members; see each other teach; have access to each

other's classrooms; join together in the evaluation of instruction; share information about the students for whom they are jointly responsible; and hold discussions, based upon common observations, of teaching and the effects of teaching.\(^3\)

Team teaching no doubt will go through many phases of development and its success in part will depend upon the improvements made in education in general because it is an integral part of educational change. Team teaching, with its built in flexibility, offers one of the best solutions to the growing numbers of qualified and informed teachers. But team teaching is much more than a solution. It is "professionalism for professionals." Teachers are professionals and as such require time, they require time to think, time to plan, time to read, time to meet together, time to study, time to write, time to travel and time to relax.

In any move toward increased academic accomplishment, children must never be subordinated to an organizational concept, and the factor of individual difference must remain the basic premise of programs in elementary education. Children are our prime responsibility and when we get before them we really have to turn them on. It isn't enough to educate for today. We have got to educate for a world thirty, forty or even a hundred years from now.

\(^3\)Ibid., pp. 8-9.
One of the keys to successful team teaching is intelligent teacher selection and adequate planning. No teacher should be assigned to a team against his will and perhaps, more important, no teacher should be mentally bludgeoned or cajoled into participating. Team teaching demands too much of teachers to be successful with reluctant participants.

The writer believes that team teaching, provided it meets certain criteria, offers a greater opportunity for achieving the objectives of elementary school education in a modern, complex, and interdependent society. J. Lloyd Trump supports this statement with his listing of the following criteria:

New developments in team teaching will produce superior outcomes for students only if:

1) the curriculum content is revised further to provide a more logical, sequential organization;
2) the size of pupil groups is varied with different purposes of instruction;
3) rigid time arrangements are replaced by flexible schedules;
4) educational facilities are used more efficiently and economically;
5) evaluation techniques are altered;
6) all aspects of the teaching-learning process are related in an instructional system;
7) teachers are reeducated to use the new system and in the process develop changed professional roles.

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Most educational innovations suffer from setbacks particularly if they were introduced with too much haste and too little forethought. It would be unfortunate if a given school decided the team teaching issue on the basis of the overall team teaching movement in the country. There is probably a legitimate place for several different forms of organization in the elementary schools of this country. A decision as to which is the best should not be determined by what is best for the general population of elementary schools, but rather what is best for your school with your particular teachers. Team teaching is characterized by variation. There is no "master plan" for all schools. Agreement is found in the concept that teachers can accomplish more when they pool their talents than when they work alone.

Any attempt to definitively evaluate the many team teaching projects at this time would be premature. Unfortunately, much of the information on team teaching must be examined critically because it contains many variables. We need to continue experimentation in numerous areas of education before we can thoroughly understand those problems which belong primarily to education in general and are the result of the team teaching project. The fact that sophisticated research designs have not been as apparent as one might hope does not in itself condemn team teaching. What has not been done must be done. As an
integral part of the program, evaluation needs to be given careful consideration. Some school districts have re­search specialists as members of the staff; other assistance may be obtained from educational research specialists at the college level.

Conclusions

Experience has shown that team teaching has provided a better correlation of subject matter; improved the curriculum; improved the quality of teaching in many areas via the use of aides (relieving the teacher of many housekeeping chores); made more efficient use of space and school equipment; and stimulated practices that depart from traditional organization such as the elimination of grade lines and multi-age grouping.

If the writer has learned one thing from her review of the literature it is this--that good team teaching is not easy. It will require careful planning, dedicated preparation, continual scrutiny and at times, an almost herioc amount of human understanding. Why team up then? Why not continue to go it alone as teachers have for centuries? This writer's answer can only be found in the idea that learning opportunities are immensely widened and improved when a good team approach is implemented. The strength of our society and the future role of this
nation in the world will be determined by educators who explore new and better ways of teaching all the children of all the people. The choice may be to innovate or to stagnate.

Judson T. Shaplin asks and then responds to a very crucial question regarding the future of team teaching.

Will team teaching in its various forms follow the fate of past projects which have challenged the traditional organization of the American schools and the teaching profession? Our analysis suggests that the times are different, that the impetus and technology for change along with broad societal participation of both laymen and specialists, in other fields has sufficient force and support about lasting innovation. Of itself, as a way of merely organizing teachers to work together, team teaching would perhaps be doomed. But linked as it is with other major directions of change, team teaching may make a sustained and permanent contribution to the improvement of education. This will occur, however, only if the aims and goals of team teaching are clarified.5

One of the difficulties for beginning team teaching projects has been the tendency to develop all-embracing statements of objectives and goals, phrased in the most general terms. Ultimate goals receive the greatest emphasis and mask the more immediate and possible goals. A small working group can only hope to achieve progress in a few directions. It cannot hope to be the instrument of reorganization of an entire system.

The goals of a specific team teaching project should be consistent with the size of the reorganization contemplated. These goals can also be seen as improvement goals. They often are aimed at improving the career pattern and status of the teacher; the working conditions of the teacher; the patterns of curriculum development; teacher training and the supervision of education in general. Improvements do have their price. The improvements that can be achieved through team teaching will be in proportion to the investment that is made in its behalf.
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