

Further comments from literature on collaborative (team-teaching/ co-teaching).

“Co-teaching is two or more people sharing responsibility for teaching some or all of the students assigned to a classroom. It involves the distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instruction, and evaluation for a classroom of students. Another way of saying this is that co-teaching is a fun way for students to learn from two or more people who may have different ways of thinking or teaching. Some people say that co-teaching is a creative way to connect with and support others to help all children learn. Others say co-teaching is a way to make schools more effective. Co-teaching can be likened to a marriage. Partners must establish trust, develop and work on communication, share the chores, celebrate, work together creatively to overcome the inevitable challenges and problems, and anticipate conflict and handle it in a constructive way.” (Cushman, 2013, p31)

A meta-analysis by Martin and Pavan (1976) concluded that despite a lack of independent variables for assessing open plan spaces, the overall impact of open plan environments are not to the detriment of student progression. **However, co-teaching has a huge impact on teacher performance.** Sharratt and Fullan (2012).

Co-Teaching is also linked to collective teacher efficacy, which according to Hattie (2016) has the greatest impact on student learning (effect size of 1.57). Co-teaching helps to develop collective teacher efficacy as it is a means of achieving improved collaboration, transparency and accountability.

One of the recommendations from Gonski (2018) is:

Recommendation 10: accelerate the development of contemporary pedagogy through the use of collaboration, mentoring, observation and feedback, including from colleagues and students, by incorporating these practices into the core role of teachers and creating the conditions to enable teachers to engage in them. The report says that ‘embedding professional collaboration is a necessity in everyday teaching practice; is one of the actions that needs to be taken to support a focus on individual students learning growth.

According to the Gonski panel, there are 3 benefits of collaboration:

- Collaborative structures are more efficient and flexible
- Collaboration can lead to more authentic engagement of teachers where they feel able to challenge each other to keep improving their professional practice,
- A collaborative approach means teachers can get differentiated support specific to their individual needs.

Active collaboration includes peer observation, feedback, coaching, mentoring and team teaching.

Deakin University States the benefits of team teaching:

Teacher collaboration is not in, and of itself, a positive influence on learning outcomes unless it is active collaboration, including; teacher mentoring and coaching; team planning, teaching and problem solving; group designed and conducted action research; teacher appraisal and feedback; and classroom observation and feedback (Grattan Institute, 2014).

Assumed benefits of collaboration for teachers emerging from the literature:

- less isolation, provision of moral support and promoting confidence
- increased knowledge-base and efficiency and effectiveness of teaching
- more focus on behavioural and academic outcomes for all students
- reducing overload and setting boundaries to teachers' task
- promoting teacher reflection and teacher learning .

Benefits for the learners taken from a study by Gladman (2014) which elicited student voice:

- The students' understanding of classroom instruction is improved by team teaching.
- Team teaching increases students' willingness to ask questions in class.
- Awareness that students' participation contributes to the effective (or ineffective) implementation of team teaching.
- Team teaching enables teachers to take better care of students.
- The kind of relationship between the teaching partners contributes to the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of their team teaching.
- The complementarity of two teachers working together will result in improved teaching (e.g., one partner can make up for a deficiency in the other; one partner can improve from the influence of the other).