

Leading the way together: Actionable strategies for supporting co-teaching from the top down

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As inclusive education becomes a global imperative, co-teaching has emerged as a powerful model for ensuring access to instruction for all learners. But while research has long focused on classroom-level collaboration, sustainable co-teaching doesn't happen in isolation—it requires leadership. This interactive session offers concrete, research-informed strategies for leaders at all levels—university, district, school, and organizational—to initiate, support, and sustain effective co-teaching partnerships.

Drawing from international collaboration and recent cross-cultural research, the two presenters—a co-teaching expert from the United States and the principal of a school for children with Autism in Denmark—will provide actionable insights for administrators, teacher educators, policymakers, and instructional leaders.

Participants will explore how co-teaching is supported (or hindered) by systemic structures, cultural expectations, and leadership decisions in different countries, and what lessons can be applied globally.

This session will highlight:

- University-level practices to prepare educators through coursework, co-teaching internships, and professor modeling.
- District-level strategies to build vision, allocate resources, and support scheduling and staffing.
- School-level actions that create a culture of collaboration through professional development, protected co-planning time, and shared leadership.
- Organizational-level policies that integrate inclusion and co-teaching into broader strategic goals and accountability frameworks.

Participants will receive examples of effective leadership practices from multiple countries, guided reflection tools, an introduction to the Co-teaching Plan-Do-Study-Act model (Murawski & Lochner, 2018), and a downloadable resource outlining a leadership checklist for co-teaching implementation.

Session content will be grounded in research, including Gulløv and Murawski's (2024) work on Denmark's inclusion efforts and Murawski's foundational studies on co-teaching as a service delivery model (Murawski, 2010; Murawski & Bernhardt, 2015). In addition, findings from the Cross-Cultural Co-Teaching Survey and international focus groups will illuminate the administrator's role as both gatekeeper and facilitator of inclusive practice.

In this brief session, attendees will experience co-teaching in action. The two presenters—an internationally recognized co-teaching expert from the U.S.A. and a published author on co-teaching in Denmark—will model co-teaching approaches, including Team Teaching and Parallel Teaching, inviting participants to experience the very strategies they can support. Expect laughter, shared leadership, and practical takeaways you can bring to your setting immediately.

This session is designed for those in leadership roles—or those who prepare or work with them—who are ready to move from rhetoric to results. Whether you oversee a university program, a school site, or a national initiative, you'll leave with a clearer roadmap for how to ensure that co-teaching is not only possible, but successful.