**Collaboration Among Educators**

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A Capstone Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education

Keene State College

May 2012

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**Introduction**

Teacher collaboration is vital to the education of students. “Collaboration is the process of communication between individuals with common or similar goals, communication that may be informal or systematic” (Schneider, 2007, p.10). Through collaboration, teachers gain new skills that improve their personal teacher effectiveness and support their overall profession. The skills developed through collaboration include learning new perspectives, new learning experiences, new skills in behavior management, and gaining a deeper understanding of school policies and procedures. Teachers gain valuable insight into their students through collaboration with other professionals such as the speech and language pathologist, occupational therapist, special educator, and/or a physical therapist (Blask, 2011, p. 4). Collaboration happens not only inside the school but also outside of the school with teachers’ life experiences. By drawing on life experiences, teachers are able to bring relevant community learning experiences into the classroom. Collaboration will ultimately improve the quality of education.

 I am a teacher who has worked in many different schools and settings. In some of these settings I witnessed teachers collaborating and gaining insight and in others it did not appear that collaboration was happening. In all of the schools I have worked in, I have witnessed spontaneous collaboration (taking advantage of moments during the day that two educators have a chance to discuss a topic); the amount of time devoted to collaboration varied. Often spontaneous collaboration tends to be short. A few schools that I worked in implemented school wide staff meetings and one had weekly core meetings in addition to staff meetings. In the core meetings, teachers of the same grade level collaborated. Currently, I am employed at a setting where I work with children preschool-eighth grade. Collaboration is mostly spontaneous with teachers seeking assistance with a specific topic from a co-worker.

As a teacher, I am constantly trying to improve the quality of education that my students are getting. It is important to discern what climate supports positive collaboration and where teachers are more effective collaborators. I will be discovering the most effective ways to collaborate through this research project.

Through this research project, I will be discovering the benefits and challenges that teachers associate with collaboration. By knowing the benefits and the challenges, teachers can grow and expand on the quality of collaboration and ultimately improve the quality of the education that the students are receiving. It is also important to discern what climate, educational design and environment supports positive collaboration among educators. Through this research project it will be determined how teachers collaborate, when they collaborate, and what they collaborate on, which in turn will showcase what environments promote collaboration.

**Problem Statement**

The purpose of this investigation is to determine the components of collaboration. It is important to recognize the components that contribute to collaboration so that educators will in turn collaborate and ultimately improve their teaching practices and the quality of education. I will determine the components of collaboration such as with whom teachers collaborate with, what they collaborate on, how this helps improve their teaching, how they feel about collaboration, and what the administration does to support collaboration. Collaboration happens within formal and informal settings with colleagues and others who can offer broader knowledge of a specific subject. I will determine when collaboration happens within the group of educators participating in my research.

Today’s teachers are called upon for multiple roles. For an example, teachers are called upon to assist students in learning new technology, help students engage in research, help students to learn new skills in addition to gaining knowledge of the general curriculum. Most teachers do not have all the skills required for teaching the whole child; through collaboration, teachers are better equipped to meet the needs of their students’ growing needs.

**Research Questions**

* In what ways are teachers collaborating formally or informally?
* What are teachers’ attitudes towards collaborating with each other?
* When collaboration is taking place what do teachers collaborate on?
* With whom is collaboration taking place?
* How does collaboration improve their teaching practice?

**Methodology**

 “Collaboration is the process of communication between individuals with common or similar goals, communication that may be informal or systematic” (Schneider, 2007, p.10). Teacher collaboration is vital to the education of students. Collaboration takes place among educators as well as with those outside the educational facility. Outside the educational realm, a teacher may collaborate with a professional in the community in order to create a learning experience for the students (an example would be with a fireman who would teach or assist in teaching a lesson on fire safety). Collaboration helps teachers gain new skills that support their overall profession and improve their own personal teacher effectiveness. Through collaboration, teachers gain a refreshed perspective on their profession by learning new ideas and seeing other ways to present a learning experience. Teachers are able to connect with others, discuss experiences, and gain valuable perspectives and insights through collaboration.

 Teacher collaboration is vital to the education of students; through collaboration, teachers gain more in their personal teacher effectiveness and are therefore better educators. The purpose of my investigation is to determine how collaboration occurs in one educational facility, what the benefits are and teacher attitudes towards collaboration.

 I will conduct my research using general education teachers, special education teachers and teachers of special subjects. I will be targeting the faculty at a rural K-8 school with a student population of approximately three hundred. There are approximately forty faculty members employed at this school where I will be conducting my research. My research will consist of a survey and a focus group. At this time there are no known risks to participating in the survey or focus group.

 Before proceeding with my research, I will get permission from the principal of the school. I will assure him/her that my survey will not interrupt the normal day to day activities of the school and faculty. Prior to distributing the surveys through faculty mail boxes I will get permission from the principal. Consent to use the information on the survey is implied once a faculty member completes the survey and returns it to me. At the beginning of the focus group I will pass out consent forms to all attending faculty members requesting their consent to use the information that they provide during the session.

 By February 6, 2012, I will distribute the surveys. These will be distributed to all faculty members within the school through their personal mail boxes. I will enclose a letter from myself with the survey outlining the purpose of the survey and advising when I need the survey back. I will also make sure that it is clear that this is a voluntary survey, completely anonymous (name, school and town will not be revealed) and there is no penalty for not participating. The survey will take approximately ten minutes of their time. The survey will ask questions to help determine who the teachers collaborate with, why they find themselves collaborating and what subjects they find themselves collaborating on. It will also address how often collaboration is taking place, if it is in an informal or formal setting and what the general attitude of collaboration is. I will request that the surveys be returned to me no later than February 27, 2012.

 On March 7, 2012 I will conduct a focus group drawing on the same faculty of my targeted school. The focus group will take place after school hours but on the school property and will be made up of general educators, special educators and special subject teachers. The focus group will last approximately an hour.

 At the focus group, I will have an objective person take notes to free myself up to conduct the focus group. At the focus group, I will encourage discussion about with whom teachers collaborate, does collaboration happen with others in your same grade level or other grade levels, and if collaboration happens outside the learning facility. I will also ask if the teachers feel collaboration makes them better educators, does the administration support collaboration, and what times are most beneficial for collaboration. Once the data has been collected, participants will have the opportunity to obtain further information on this project. At any time, if the participants have additional questions about this study, they may contact Andrea MacMurray at (603) 313-8455 or Dr Ellen Nuffer at Keene State College (603) 358-2298.

 By March 25. 2012, all data will have been collected and analysis will be completed. My research findings will be written by April 15, 2012.

**Literature Review**

Collaboration among educators is vital to educating all students. Collaboration can take place among educators, families, other faculty, and people outside the educational community. Collaboration among educators results in learning about new perspectives, engaging in new learning experiences, discovering new skills in behavior management, and developing a deeper understanding of school policies and procedures. The Literature Review will examine the characteristics of teachers who collaborate as well as what administrators and their schools are doing to support collaboration. It will address with whom the teachers are collaborating, when they are collaborating, the various characteristics of schools that affect collaboration such as schedules and personal philosophies of individual teachers, what programs schools are currently implementing to support and encourage collaboration and how administrators and educators define collaboration and how they may differ.

Teaching is undergoing a shift. It was historically known as an isolated profession and now teaching is moving towards a more collaborative model (Hindin, Morocco, Mott, and Aquilar, 2007, p.349). In the past teachers were responsible for their individual classrooms and rarely consulted others within the field. Today schools are implementing various programs to help encourage collaboration such as professional learning communities, and leadership teams. According to Hindin et al. (2007) typically, newer teachers were appointed a mentor, but after completion of the degree and first few years of teaching, the support system seemed to dwindle. Thus, collaboration is or was seen as for only inexperienced teachers. Today collaboration throughout an educator’s teaching career holds great value to not only the education of students but the well being of the teachers. Teachers have their own beliefs and philosophies; when they collaborate they learn and grow from each other. The importance of collaboration is not only on improving teachers’ classroom practices but to stimulate teachers’ own intellectual development (Hindin et al., 2007).

As teachers move away from individual practice and toward teacher collaboration, they are able to expand their content knowledge and skills. “Teacher collaboration supports student learning, and the good news is that teachers who work in strong learning communities are more satisfied with their careers and are more likely to remain in teaching long enough to become accomplished educators” (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.5).

**How is collaboration defined? What are the characteristics of effective collaboration?**

Collaboration can be defined as co-equal professionals co-planning voluntarily (Carter, Prater, Jackson, and Marchant, 2009, p.60). Schneider (2007) defines collaboration as “the process of communication between individuals with a common or similar goals, communication that may be informal or systematic (10)”. These two definitions of collaboration are similar in that both definitions imply that collaborating teachers have similar goals and must communicate with each other.

Teachers are collaborating; however, there is a lot of variation in how collaboration takes place. Schneider (2007) compiled a list of various types of collaboration and what they entail. The types of collaboration are as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| Table I: Collaboration terminology |
| Terminology | Authors | Brief definition |
| Contrived collaboration vs. robust collaboration | Gitlin (1999) | Top-down, compulsory with planned outcomes, vs. voluntary, ongoing with shared planning. |
| Cooperation vs. collaboration | Rorner & Wipple (1991) | Helping each other, vs. negotiate joint responsibility from the state of suspended knowing. |
| Collaboration process vs. collaborative arrangement  | Arllen & Gable (1996) | Sequential procedure for cooperative groups, vs. choice of how to deliver content. |
| Consultation vs. push-in services vs. teams | Welch, Brownell & Sheridan (1999) | Assistance to the teacher, vs. support services in the classroom, vs. several professionals working together. |
| Multidisciplinary vs. interdisciplinary vs. trans-disciplinary | Keys, Bemak, Carpenter & Kingsears (1998) | Experts work independently in their area, vs. exchange information and plan together, vs. coordinated activities throughout all stages of assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation. |
| Co-teaching | Cook & Friend (1996) | Two or more teachers sharing responsibility for the same class. |
| Cooperative teaching | Bauwens & Hourcade (1995) | Joint planning, complementary instruction and supportive learning. |

(Schneider, 2007, p.11)

 The above collaboration terminology describes different collaborative instructional methods. These do not change the process and purpose of collaboration but rather relate to how collaboration occurs.

The definition and interpretation of collaboration varies from teacher to teacher, school to school, and state to state. At times schools and/or teachers may think they are collaborating but are merely cooperating (Meirink, Imants, Meijer, and Verloop, 2010, p.4). Collaboration involves teachers working with each other to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge base which in turn results in the students receiving a better quality of education. Collaboration is teachers taking joint responsibility for educational content. Cooperation among teachers lacks the deeper thinking and understanding of all aspects of the teaching profession. Cooperation is merely teachers helping each other by teaching rather than sharing in the planning and development of the lessons.

 Regardless of how collaboration is defined or what the teaching method is, effective collaboration consists of teachers taking equal responsibility for the success of all students. For collaboration to be successful one would need planning time, effort, and administrative support (Carter et al., 2009).

There are six principles that support collaboration: shared values and goals where the members of the team share common goals and values, collective responsibility where each member of the team takes responsibility for the success of the school and program equally, authentic assessment which is reliable, valid, and unbiased, self directed reflection where each member of the team reflects on their teaching practice voluntarily almost instantly each day, stable settings, the place of meeting is always consistent, and strong leadership support, the administration supports the team in many ways one being providing time during the school day to meet, and allows time at staff meetings to share their findings. (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.5).

 Bacon (2008) describes collaboration as a natural process, as it happens sometimes without even necessarily recognizing it (p.36). Bacon states that informal collaboration among educators happens often. However, formal collaboration can be just as beneficial as informal collaboration if not more so (Bacon, 2008, p.36). Informal collaboration happens a lot, but more opportunities for formal collaboration are needed according to Bacon. Bacon states that formal collaboration is important because a teacher can collect data to assess where the students are academically and where they need to go next (Bacon, 2008, p.36). Once again, the definition of collaboration does not change but the methods used by teachers to collaborate vary.

**What are the characteristics of teachers who are collaborating?**

Teachers who collaborate tend share one common trait–similar philosophies. Teachers who share common philosophies tend to work together more, thus, collaborating more often with each other than teachers who do not share common philosophies.

It is also believed that teachers who are team players tend to be better at collaboration. “Teacher effectiveness has less to do with individual attributes, and far more to do with the extent to which teachers work with each other and provide collective leadership for their schools and communities” (Berry et al., 2009).

The quality of teacher effectiveness has been directly related to the extent that teachers are collaborating. Teachers who share similar philosophies and are team players can be effective educators not only for the students but for their colleagues. “Teachers at any experience level stand to gain from collaborative work. Teachers who have consistent opportunities to work with effective colleagues also improve in their teaching effectiveness” (Berry, Daughtrey, and Wieder, 2009, p.2).

**With whom and how do educators collaborate?**

 Teachers most often collaborate with their own peers/other teachers and members of the community. They may collaborate horizontally or vertically. Horizontal collaboration is when teachers collaborate with others of the same grade level. Vertical collaboration is when teachers collaborate with teachers of a different grade level or administration (Berry et al., 2009). Collaboration outside the community is not labeled as either horizontal or vertical.

 Berry conducted a study to determine how the settings of an urban school district affect the quality of teachers teaching and retention of teachers in these high need urban areas. The study consisted of 1,210 surveys being distributed and 29 follow up interviews were conducted. The teachers within this study most often collaborated horizontally.

 The researchers concluded that vertical collaboration, could be just as important if not more so than horizontal collaboration. This was found to be beneficial as teachers could share knowledge of students from previous years and bring new perspectives to content that they may not currently be teaching.

Technology is beginning to play a part with whom and how educators collaborate. Today more online meetings are taking place (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.11). Through online meetings the convenience factor increases and more teachers are able to collaborate. However, success for an online collaborative meeting requires the following “skilled facilitators, availability of collaborative online tools (e.g., interactive whiteboards, video/audio, text chat space, shared workspaces) and stable and “user friendly” platforms” (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.11). Technology also enables educators to collaborate both horizontally and vertically as those participating can be involved at their convenience and not at a specified place and time.

**What programs are schools/administrators currently implementing to encourage collaboration among educators?**

 Many schools are implementing programs that encourage collaboration. “Professional development that promotes teacher learning and growth is critical for career and technical educators now more than ever before” (Sturko and Gregson, 2009, p.35). In public schools workshops are often required; school systems bring in various speakers to improve the quality of their school and their teachers’ teaching. However, in order to truly reinvent their teaching, teachers need time to explore, reflect, and collaborate with one another (Sturko and Gregson, 2009, p.36).

One program that schools are currently implementing is professional learning communities (PLC). Professional learning communities are defined as groups of teachers who meet regularly for the purpose of increasing their own learning and that of their students (Lieberman and Miller, 2011, p.16). Through professional learning communities, educators learn from one another. A professional learning community is an environment that supports collaboration which in turn improves the growth of individuals and of the school as a whole (Lieberman and Miller, 2011, p.16). Through professional learning communities, teachers are better equipped to examine theory and practice. As a team, they examine their practice, implement new learning experiences, and reflect together as a team as to what went well and what needs improvement (Lieberman and Miller, 2011, p.16).

Fulton and Britton researched PLC's and found that when teachers collaborate they are able to add to success in schools, and improve their teaching (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.4). When teachers collaborate, they not only expand their knowledge on their individual grades and/or subjects but also expand their knowledge of individual students. As teachers gain valuable insights on teaching, they are more equipped to bring these ideas into the school and into the classroom thus, improving the success of the school.

Through review of many studies done on PLC’s the underlying theme in all was how important shared philosophies is to the success of a PLC.

 Levine (2010) suggested an approach to collaboration that he termed an inquiry community (p.112). An inquiry community is a committee that works together to critically examine the school’s most pressing issues and reflect on the school’s current practices in such a way that is most relevant to the success of their school. Inquiry communities rely heavily on teachers discussing current practices and reflecting on previous practices. The purpose of inquiry communities is to enact changes in teaching. In order for this type of community to be effective, all committee members must work together to achieve the common goals.

 Administrative support and belief in the value of collaboration must be present for successful teacher collaboration. For collaboration to be successful, teachers need time to not only adequately plan for their classroom, but plan for a structured collaboration meeting. “Successful collaboration requires planning time, effort, and administrative support” (Carter et al., 2009). In order for teachers to have the time built into their school schedules to support collaboration, teachers need administrative support. Those schools who schedule time for organized staff meetings, grade level meetings and planning time where informal collaboration may occur, tend to be more successful at collaboration.

**What is the time frame for collaboration?**

 To allow ample time for teachers to truly collaborate, schedules must align. Scheduling collaboration time allows for teachers to plan for the collaboration meeting and the amount of time scheduled enables teachers to really get immersed in the collaboration topic. Berry, et al. (2009) interviewed a principal that recommended at least 90-minute blocks for a collaboration meeting. By having this large block of time, teachers are better able to collaborate with other teachers developing learning experiences, discussing student data, and behavioral management.

 Successful collaboration is the process in which teachers share resources and share the responsibility of decision making (Carter et al., 2009). “Regardless of the collaborative structure being used (e.g., one-on-one interactions, co-teaching, collaborative consultation), successful collaboration requires planning time, effort, and administrative support” (Carter et al., 2009).

 “Teachers need a common time to meet on a regular and sustained basis” (Fulton and Britton, 2011, p.14). In order for valuable collaboration to occur a relationship must be built on trust and respect; it takes time to develop this within collaboration meetings.

**What are some of the challenges affecting collaboration?**

 One of the biggest challenges for collaboration is time. In order for collaboration to be effective, schedules must align and there must be adequate time to collaborate. Teachers need adequate time to discuss, get involved and contemplate what has been discussed. Berry et al. (2009) suggests having an agenda for collaboration meetings. According to Berry et al. (2009) the structure of collaboration connects directly to teacher effectiveness.

 Another challenge to building an effective collaboration community is creating an environment of mutual trust and respect. Teachers and educators need to feel safe in order to open up and provide feedback. This tends to occur when teachers feel that they have the respect of their colleagues and their opinions are valued.

 Schneider (2007) states that there is a ‘gap between theory and practice’ (p.7). Schneider explains that teachers need three prerequisites in order for collaboration to be successful (Schneider, 2007, p.17). First, teachers need to have the understanding that others will have different opinions and perspectives than their own (Schneider, 2007, p.17) but, will, in turn, have respect for one another. Second, teachers need to be aware of their non-verbal body language as well as others (Schneider, 2007, p.17). Third, teachers need to perfect their active listening skills and question techniques that help one and another to expand on their thinking (Schneider, 2007, p.17). Many schools value the idea of collaboration but when it comes down to implementing the programs within their school, they fall short. This seems to be so, because teachers lack the training and skills needed to be successful collaborators and because the administration does not allow the time needed for successful collaboration.

In summary collaboration is beneficial to improve the quality of education and enhance the education practices of all teachers. When members of the team share common goals, values and take collective responsibility for the success of the school, it is evident that positive outcomes result and are a direct correlation to collaboration.

**Results and Data Analysis**

The focus of this study was to understand the components of teacher collaboration and the overall effect it has on both the teachers and students. “Collaboration is defined as the process of communication between individuals with common or similar goals, communication that may be informal or systematic” (Schneider, 2007, p.10). In the past teachers were responsible for developing their own areas of expertise and classrooms without assistance from others. Now it is believed that teacher collaboration is of utmost importance to not only improve the quality of education for the students, but also to improve the professionalism and knowledge of the educators.

This research focused on the following areas:

* In what ways are teachers collaborating, formally or informally?
* What are teachers’ attitudes towards collaborating with each other?
* When collaboration is taking place, what do teachers collaborate on?
* With whom is collaboration taking place?
* How does collaboration improve their teaching practice?

This study took place in a rural elementary school comprised of grades K-8 with approximately 300 students. There are approximately 40 faculty members at this school including general educators, special educators, and teachers of special subjects. The methods used in this study were a survey and a focus group.

Survey Results

The survey was distributed to all faculty members who were given two weeks to complete and return it to the writer. A focus group of teachers took place two weeks after the surveys were collected in order to further explore their understanding of collaboration. A member of each teaching discipline was invited to the focus group.

To collect data answering the questions noted above, a Collaboration Survey (Appendix A), was distributed. Responses were received from special educators, grade level teachers, and teachers of special subjects. The responses to each question were tallied on a Data Collection Chart (Appendix B).

The survey asked about what forms of collaboration were taking place. It was determined that the majority of the formal collaboration was in the form of monthly staff meetings and weekly grade level meetings. However, informal collaboration was taking place daily through informal conversations and e-mails with telephone calls being used on an “as needed” basis.

Formal Collaboration Meetings were taking place with the Staff as well as STAT (Student Teacher Advisory Team), Grade Level Teachers and Other (includes teachers of special subjects such as physical education, language arts, art). The overwhelming majority of the faculty surveyed were involved in monthly staff meetings with teachers and administrators. Grade Level and STAT meetings were held most often on a weekly basis with daily and other meetings (described as “as needed” by the survey participants) being held less frequently. (Appendix C) Attendees of the STAT meetings were often involved because a particular student was on the agenda to discuss his/her behavior or progress. Grade level meetings often include the special education teacher. Other forms of formal collaboration are regularly scheduled e-mail updates to parents, regularly scheduled PLC (Professional Learning Community) meetings on every second and third Thursday, and conversations between a special education teacher who met individually each week with every grade level teacher where they had a mutual student.

All participants indicated that they collaborate on an informal basis daily through conversations. E-mail was used by approximately one-half of the participants on a daily basis to contact other teachers who may have insight to a particular subject or student or to pass information to parents. Weekly collaboration in the form of e-mail and telephone calls was an informal collaboration format that is used but not by all participants. (Appendix D) It was stated that informal meetings take place before and after school and most often the conversations revolve around academic progress and behavior issues. Most preferred face to face conversations as informal collaboration but will use other forms such as telephone calls or e-mails as needed.

This study found that collaboration takes place throughout the educational community but varies depending on the area of discipline. It was found that weekly meetings occur most often within the individual disciplines. Grade Team, Special Educators and the Art teacher had the most weekly meetings with administrators, teachers of a different grade and the physical education teacher coming close behind. (Appendix E) All participants indicated that the primary topic of these meetings, regardless of whom they were collaborating with, was the students. Other topics heading the list were curriculum, behavior, and available resources for topic instruction. Grade level and grade team teachers tended to discuss academics, behavior, logistics, curriculum, and students. When the discussion gets into specific discipline areas the focus changes. For instance, the special educator will discuss curriculum for a specific student and not the curriculum in general. The discussion may also focus on modification of the curriculum for only one student and not the whole. Administrators may focus their collaboration efforts around outcomes of team meetings, student population concerns, meeting state curriculum standards and behavior plans for the school.

Special subject teachers are collaborated with on a more “as needed” basis. Topics of collaboration were the students, resources, planning of activities, homework, behavior of individual students, supplies needed for a specific class, curriculum integration and research paper materials and support. It was also mentioned that teachers will collaborate with parents, classroom aides, and guest speakers on subject matter as well as services.

Of the thirteen respondents to this survey, it was found that when teachers are collaborating, they most often collaborate on general curriculum topics, behavioral management challenges, and IEP’s. It was found that collaboration takes place on a smaller scale on academic support plans and in other areas such as health and family issues, parent concerns, transition to middle school and the logistics of same, projects, field trips, school functions, intervention, and modification of curriculum. (Appendix F) For those teachers collaborating within the general curriculum the majority collaborated within the mathematics, reading, and writing disciplines. Other areas collaborated on to a lesser degree including interdisciplinary lessons, unified arts, science, and social studies. (Appendix G)

Focus Group Results

The second segment of this study consisted of a focus group made up of educators from the same rural educational community. This was held approximately two weeks after the surveys were collected. The focus group consisted of members from the special education and general education departments.

The following questions were asked of the focus group participants.

* What does collaboration look like to you?
* What do you find are the benefits of collaboration?
* What are some challenges to collaborating?
* Explain how you feel collaboration affects your teaching practice.

All focus group participants agreed that collaboration was ongoing communication regardless of the format it takes. It was described as “tinkering until we get it right.” The entire group agreed that collaboration is often done on the fly and sporadic. These impromptu meetings take place in the hallways or lunch room and are often a quick discussion on a particular topic. However, at this educational facility there are specific times set aside for collaboration meetings. These formal collaboration meetings take place with parents, special education teacher/coordinator, administration/faculty, grade level teachers and outside resources.

The individuals in the group felt very strongly about the collaboration with outside resources. Examples of resources outside this educational community included the teachers collaborating with another school on handling behavior management issues and collaborating with a parent to come to a classroom to educate the students on a specific topic, such as the Holocaust. Teachers stated that parents are essential to successful collaboration within an educational facility. Parents must feel like they are part of the team and that they are heard and their input is valuable.

Another point that was raised was that collaboration goes more smoothly if the individuals know each other, have respect for their knowledge, and have similar values, collaboration goes much smoother. Mutual trust is invaluable.

As the focus group moved on to discuss the benefits of collaboration, it was obvious that all participants believed in and supported collaboration efforts by their peers. All felt that they are better able to meet the student’s needs through collaboration. Examples cited were new things are learned about each child by working with each other, different methods of testing may be used for an individual child as discovered by a peer, or how instruction can be tailored to be more effective for an individual child or group of students. Through collaboration, children are able to learn from more experiences as the teachers share these with each other.

With all the good believed to come from collaboration, the focus group participants did feel there are obstacles and challenges. Time was overwhelmingly the biggest obstacle to collaboration. It was stressed that collaboration does not always fit in the times set aside for formal collaboration meetings. Formal collaboration meetings often turn into general meetings and do not always accomplish a solution for the problem at hand if not kept on track. Informal collaboration happens often due to the lack of specific times to collaborate or not enough time allowed for a meeting.

Another challenge to successful collaboration was including the right individuals in the collaboration efforts. There are some individuals who do not want to share their ideas, who do not want to listen to others and do not see the benefit of collaboration. In this category, the focus group included some parents who do not want to be involved with their children’s education or do not want to work with the educator(s) to assist in their child’s learning.

The last topic of discussion in the focus group was how they felt collaboration affects their teaching practice. All felt they were more creative in developing and providing the students with developmentally appropriate lessons. Through collaboration, the participants stated that they had “more tricks to use” and it gave them a “bigger tool bag”. Collaboration makes them lifelong learners because they continue to learn new things from each other. These learnings can be in the form of factual education or learning new instructional methods.

Collaboration provides a way for teachers not to feel isolated in their individual classrooms. Collaboration allows them to expand beyond their four walls and draw on the ideas of others. The members of the focus group agreed that they collaborate on other topics besides academics and behaviors. Additionally, one must collaborate with others to find a colleague to supervise their class when they have to go to a meeting or to have additional staff attend or chaperone an activity.

The overarching themes of the focus group were communication, time, meeting students’ needs, and creativity. Constructive communication is dependent on the relationship you share with the person you are collaborating with. It was agreed that there is never enough time to delve deeply enough into the topics at hand. Effective collaboration needs time. All felt that through collaboration they are better able to meet needs because they collaborate on instructional plans, adaptation, and modification to the general curriculum to help all students be successful. The teachers felt that collaboration helps them be more creative because they can expand on their own knowledge through the knowledge of others. This occurs with educators within their own facility, educators from another educational facility and with those within the community who may have skills or knowledge to offer.

**Summary and Conclusion**

The focus group and survey used in this study were used to determine the components of collaboration used by the educators in a rural educational facility. The tools that were used for this study assisted in determining what the teachers at this school thought the benefits of collaboration are. It also showed what educational areas they collaborate on and when and with whom they collaborate. The test group consisted of all those educators who wished to participate in both the survey and focus group. Although a small sampling, the data was consistent throughout the group.

The purpose of this study was to determine the components of collaboration and determine how they contribute to educators being better at their profession. It is believed that collaboration among educators promotes better education for students. This study shows how the educators at the school being examined feel about collaboration and how it assists them in being better educators.

Discussion of Results

The first area examined was to determine if teachers are collaborating formally or informally. It was found that they collaborate in both environments. Formal collaboration is defined as a scheduled time for collaboration with a defined audience. The formal collaboration came in the form of monthly staff meetings for the entire school. Other formal collaboration meetings were held with the grade level teachers and with Student Teacher Advisory Team (referred to as STAT for the remainder of this document) members on a weekly basis. Formal collaboration meetings are also held on a less frequent basis among special educators, special subject teachers and with parents. The majority of participants felt that formal collaboration meetings are helpful due to there being a defined timeframe for the meeting to take place. In analyzing the results, the group did feel that there are drawbacks to formal collaboration. These included a limitation on the time allowed for the meeting and not always having the necessary people in attendance to accomplish or learn what was initially intended.

The teachers also use informal collaboration meetings (not scheduled or participants defined). These come in the form of hallway conversations, telephone calls, and e-mails. The educators involved in this research indicated that the majority of informal collaboration was through face to face conversations when the opportunity arose. These conversations are often short and with a peer that has been sought out due to their knowledge on a particular subject.

It was felt that both forms of collaboration were important depending on the ultimate goal of the collaboration focus.

The attitudes of the educators surveyed were unanimous when it came to the belief that collaboration was important and helpful. It was felt that collaboration takes place among the individual teams but would break down when one tried to communicate outside the comfort of their own area of expertise. This was caused by lack of time and not knowing the other educators within the school well enough to trust their judgment. All believed there needed to be more time allowed in their schedule to collaborate formally or informally. With additional time, they would not only get to know their peers better but also be able to converse with some educators they might not have looked to when only a limited amount of time was available.

One participant stated, “Collaboration is the key to success for students. Unless we are all pulling in the same direction, students do not make the progress they are capable of making.” Another participant stated “Common planning time is essential-creating time into a teacher’s schedule allows for better communication, better instruction and greater student retention.”

The focus group participants agreed that not all their peers are open to collaboration. They all agreed that some teachers and parents can close themselves off to communication and do not want to participate. This prevents the educators and parents from working together and building a strong school community.

The teachers in this study collaborate on curriculum topics, behavior challenges, instructional strategies, transition planning, special education needs, response to intervention, and health and family issues. It was determined that the majority of collaboration meetings were surrounding general curriculum such as mathematics, reading, and writing. Many participants stated that they also collaborate on social studies and science in order to expand their knowledge.

The majority of the participants indicated that they collaborate the most within their grade team, followed closely by collaboration with grade level members. Within this group, the art teacher was also collaborated with often, as she is a part of many of the grade teams. Several of the educators surveyed also stated that they collaborate with the special educators and administration and to a lesser degree, teachers of different grades, special subject teachers, parents, and members outside the specific educational community. It was felt that collaboration with all of these people was beneficial to assist the teachers in expanding their knowledge and in providing a better learning experience for the students.

The last area investigated was to determine how the educators in the focus group felt collaboration affected their teaching practice. It was unanimous that all felt they are able to learn from each other and collaboration allows them to be more creative in their educational field. They all believed that they cannot possibly know everything about their field, their students, and the community in which they operate. Through collaboration, they can draw on the knowledge of others not only on subject matter but also about specific students or activities within the community.

The results of this survey mirrored those found within the literature already available on this subject. Collaboration happens formally and informally and both methods have value and drawbacks. Bacon (2008) noted that informal collaboration happens often but there is a great need for formal collaboration as well. Some of the ways in which schools are lacking is in scheduling common planning time for formal collaboration among educators. The members of this research group indicated that informal collaboration is evident and often happens “on the fly”. The members of this study felt that more time was needed for formal collaboration in which they would have the time to better communicate with their peers to expand their subject matter knowledge, learn better instructional methods and the student gains would be greater.

Due to lack of time, teachers feel they are often left to develop and implement their own lessons without assistance. Hindin et al. (2007) stated that teaching is moving away from being an isolated profession and more toward a collaboration model. This study supports those findings in that all participants agreed that they would like to have more scheduled time for collaboration and find that they and others seek each other out for guidance.

Through collaboration, all survey participants believe they have more “tools in their toolkit”. All participants agreed that they learn from their colleagues through collaboration and it makes them better educators. This supports Berry’s et al. (2009) findings of “Teachers who have consistent opportunities to work with effective colleagues also improve in their teaching effectiveness” (p.2). Not only did the participants feel they learned more about their own areas of expertise, but they are also sought out by others for input. In addition to subject matter, they become better educators through more knowledge of a particular student as provided by a colleague, more familiarity with instructional methods that they had not used before that were better suited for some students, and a more thorough knowledge of the educational community in which they work. By becoming better educators, the students receive better learning instruction and therefore receive a better education.

I was not surprised at the results of this research as respondents were all in favor of collaboration. I had no responses from anyone who did not believe in collaboration. I feel that those who were not in favor of collaboration probably did not respond to the survey and/or participate in the focus group. I did find it interesting that the art teacher was collaborated with the most of any teachers of special subjects. I believe this is because of her philosophies and her professional relationships with those in the school.

Suggestions for Strengthening the Study

As noted earlier, this study took place in a rural K-8 school. Although there were approximately 40 educators in this facility, response to the survey was limited in that only thirteen replied. This limited response could very possibly skew the results if only those in favor of collaboration responded. In addition, there were fifteen educators invited to the focus group; only five attended. Those who participated in the focus group were very passionate about collaboration and its value. However, they were quick to mention that not all their colleagues believed in collaboration and its benefits. From that, we are led to believe the results from the focus group were probably skewed as everyone attending was in favor of collaboration. There was no representation from those who may not have been in favor of collaboration.

The researcher of this study was an intern at the educational facility used for this research. Those who participated in the focus group and many who completed the survey were those with whom this intern had personal connections. As with anything in life, one is drawn to those with similar beliefs. In this case, the researcher and focus group participants all share a common passion about collaboration. A conclusion can be drawn that those who participated in the survey also had a connection to the researcher and the same passion surrounding collaboration. Due to participation being voluntary, the results appear to be weighed heavily by those who participated believing in the subject. The timeline may have also affected the results in that the surveys were distributed close to a scheduled vacation and participation may have been light due to the upcoming time away from the school. In addition, the focus group was scheduled after the vacation and those invited may have forgotten about the invite. The researcher did not want to question any participants about completion of the survey or attendance of the upcoming focus group, as she did not want to sway the participants.

I was disappointed in the number of responses to the survey and the focus group that I received. I believe the respondents to the survey were the same participants in the focus group. The attendees of the focus group were those that I had developed a professional relationship with. In reflection, to increase the number of responses, I could have sent out follow ups in the form of email, letters or face to face conversations. Time to do the personal face to face follow ups would be a challenge as all teachers had tight schedules at this facility. In addition, as an intern, I was at a disadvantage, as I did not know all of the teachers in the school. With more time in the school, I would have developed more professional relationships and possibly have received more responses due to my relationship with the educators in the school.

Recommendations for Future Research

Moving forward, I would plan differently. Surveys would not be handed out with a due date so close to a scheduled vacation. This would allow participants to return surveys during a longer period and they would not lose sight of the survey while on vacation. In addition, I would plan to conduct the focus group further from teacher time off to allow them to plan their schedule accordingly. In addition, to encourage greater participation, reminders would be sent out for both the survey and focus group. By receiving a greater participation I believe that the results of this study would be more representative of all those within the focus of the research.

I would like to conduct research during two different times during the school year once in the fall and once in the spring to see what the similarities and differences are. I hypothesize that in the fall teachers might be more apt to collaborate on behavior and intervention strategies because the students are new to them. In the spring, the content may be more focused on curriculum. With whom you collaborate may change as the year goes on and as you get to know your students as well as colleagues.

In addition to the recommendations above for better planning and follow up, I would like to do further research at other educational facilities with the same components. This would mean research at similar rural K-8 schools with similar student and teacher population. By conducting additional surveys and focus groups, the number of participants would be greater and provide a broader spectrum of data. This would in turn provide results that are more credible.

Next Steps

 I learned in this study how important collaboration is for me as a professional and the students. As an educator, I plan to collaborate with my colleagues and see the value of getting to know each one of them. It was obvious to me that each one has something to offer and I plan draw on their knowledge to make me a better educator.

 I plan on sharing my research with my colleagues at the school where this study was conducted. Some of the focus group participants specifically asked for a copy and I will share this with them. I will also share my findings with future colleagues so as to show them the value of collaboration.

Conclusion

The purpose of this investigation was to determine the components of collaboration and how those components are used to improve instructional methods and the quality of education. The primary components to effective collaboration are time, shared philosophies, relationships and the desire to improve your own effectiveness as an educator. It was determined that time is the biggest component affecting collaboration. Educators need common planning time built into their schedules to allow for productive collaboration. When there is not enough time planned, educators tend to be on their own and do not draw on the experience and knowledge of others. This is a detriment, as they are not able to gain knowledge and valuable insight from others. It was stressed by many that shared philosophies are necessary for collaboration to be effective. If educators do not have the same beliefs, they tend not to seek each other out for guidance and input. When educators share the same philosophies, they build upon each other’s knowledge and learn from each other. Educators collaborate with those they trust; strong relationships and mutual respect are a must for collaboration to be effective. If those characteristics do not exist, collaboration will not occur. Those participating in this study all believed in “expanding their tool box”. By this they mean they want to learn new instructional strategies, learn more in their own area of expertise, gain knowledge in areas outside their own area of content knowledge and ultimately be better equipped to meet students’ needs. Collaboration among educators is necessary for the overall success of the school community.

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**Collaboration Survey-Appendix A**

**Information:**

Please Circle SPED General Education Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**In what ways are you collaborating formally and how often?**

*Formally*

* Staff Meetings (Whole School Faculty Meetings)

Daily Weekly Monthly Other (Please specify)\_\_\_\_\_\_

* STAT (Student Teacher Advisory Team)

Daily Weekly Monthly Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

* Grade Level Meetings (A Meeting where teachers from the same grade level meet to discuss current events of the school)

Daily Weekly Monthly Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

* Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Weekly Monthly Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_

**In what ways are you collaborating informally and how often?**

Informally

* Conversations

Daily Weekly Monthly

Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Emails

Daily Weekly Monthly

Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* Phone Calls

Daily Weekly Monthly

Other (Please Specify)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**What is the focus of your collaboration when you do so? Please check all that apply.**

 General Curriculum

 Mathematics

 Reading

 Writing

 Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Behavioral Management

IEP’s or Children of Concern

504 Plans

 Other (Please Explain) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**With whom is collaboration taking place?**

Please place a 🗹 in all the boxes that apply and circle the correct amount of time you collaborate with colleagues and fill in a short description of the collaboration topic.

Grade Level Teachers

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Grade Team (Please Specify Grades) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Special Educator (Please Specify Grade)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Administrator

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teachers of a different grade (Please Specify Grade) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Physical Education Teacher

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Music Teacher

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Second Language Teacher (Please Specify Language) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Art Teacher

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Librarian

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Technology Teacher

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Other (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Daily Daily+ Weekly Bi-Weekly Monthly

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Topic \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Any additional comments you would like to add:**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for your completion of this survey!

Sincerely,

Andrea MacMurray

|  |
| --- |
| **Information** |
| SPED | Grades | General Ed. | Grades | Other |
| 4 | K/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 | 8 | K, 1, 3, 5, 7/8 | 2 (Spanish & reading) |

**Data Collection Chart-Appendix B**

|  |
| --- |
| **In what ways are you collaborating formally and how often?** |
| Staff Meetings | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  |  |  | 12 |  |
| STAT | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  |  | 7 | 1 | 5 (As needed) |
| Grade Level Meetings | Daily  | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  | 1 | 11 | 1 |  |
| Other | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  | 2 | 4 |  | 5 |

|  |
| --- |
| **In what ways are you collaborating informally and how often?** |
| Conversations | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  | 13 |  |  |  |
| Emails | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  | 8 | 3 |  | 2 |
| Phone Calls | Daily  | Weekly | Monthly | Other |
|  | 1 | 5 |  | 1 (As needed) |
|  |
| **What is the focus of your collaboration when you do so?** |
| General Curriculum | 12 |
| Behavioral Management | 13 |
| IEP’s of Children of Concern | 13 |
| 504 Plans | 7 |
| Other | 4 |

|  |
| --- |
| **General Curriculum** |
| Mathematics | 10 |
| Reading | 10 |
| Writing | 11 |
| Other | 7 |

|  |
| --- |
| **With whom is collaboration taking place?** |
| Grade Level Teachers | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 7 | 3 | 3 |  |  |  |  |
| Grade Team  | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  |  | 1 | 11 | 1 |  |  |  |
| Special Educator | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 2 | 1 | 6 |  | 1 | 1 (As needed) |  |
| Administrator | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 1 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 2 (As needed) |  |
| Teachers of a different grade | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 2 |  | 5 |  | 2 | 2 (As needed) |  |
| Phys Ed | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 1 |  | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 (As needed) |  |
| Music Teacher | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  |  |  | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 (As needed) |  |
| Second Language Teacher | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 1 |  | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 (As needed) |  |
| Art Teacher | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  |  |  | 6 | 2 | 1 | 3 (As needed) |  |
| Librarian | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  |  |  | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 (As needed) |  |
| Technology Teacher | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 1 | 1 | 4 |  |  | 3 (As needed) |  |
| Other | Daily | Daily+ | Weekly | Bi-Weekly | Monthly | Other | Topic |
|  | 3 | 2 |  |  |  | 2 (As needed) |  |

**Formal Collaboration-Appendix C**

**Informal Collaboration-Appendix D**

**With whom is Collaboration Taking Place-Appendix E**

**Focus of Collaboration-Appendix F**

**Focus of Collaboration with in General Curriculum-Appendix G**