

**Collaboration and Teaming:
Module II: Stages of Team Development and Effective Communication for
Collaboration**

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Objectives

As a result of successful completion of this module, participants will:

- Describe the four stages of team development, as identified in the literature on collaboration
- Apply knowledge of the stages of team development to a case study situation
- Demonstrate the ability to use the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions in role play situations
- Reflect on personal strengths and challenges regarding the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions, and supporting teams in working through the stages of team development

Essential Questions

- *How are the four “stages of team development” defined in the literature, and in what ways are they relevant to the work of school leaders?*
- *What are the characteristics of teams in various stages of development, and how can school leaders identify them?*
- *What roles can school leaders play in supporting teams as they move through the stages of team development?*
- *How are the collaborative skills of listening and asking clarifying questions defined in the literature and in practice, and how can effective use of these skills contribute to team development?*
- *In what ways might you improve your own practices related to listening, asking clarifying questions, and supporting teams as they move through the stages of team development?*

Rationale for Module Development

Module II in collaboration encompasses two primary concepts: the first, a focus on team development, and the second, a focus on interpersonal skills that are critical to effective communication and collaboration. The focus on team development is seen as important for school leaders because it provides them with a framework for understanding how collaborative teams develop and what challenges they are likely to encounter as they move along a developmental continuum, commonly described as occurring across four stages. Descriptions of the stages of group development originated within the field of psychology, through work done by Tuckman and Jensen (1977). Although a variety of terms have been assigned to the stages, all follow a similar progression in which effective groups 1) form as a group, 2) experience conflict and learn to deal with it, 3) re-group

following conflict with a renewed sense of trust and structure, and 4) achieve a high level of work and productivity (Friend & Cook, 2003; Thousand & Villa, 2000; Wheelan, 1999). A fifth stage described in some of the literature relates to the dissolution or adjournment of the team, either because it has achieved its purpose or identified some other reason for adjourning. Wheelan (1999) describes the advantages for leaders who understand these stages and their implications for team functioning:

If you know that all groups go through predictable stages of group development, then you can relax and enjoy the ride. If you don't know about group development, you might think that your fellow group members are strange or that your particular group is extremely dysfunctional or unusual. The other good thing about knowledge of group behavior is that it will make you a better member or leader. You are less likely to misinterpret what you see and more likely to be able to be constructive in what you say and do. (p. 31)

Module I included an emphasis on five elements that typically characterize effective teaming, as identified by Thousand and Villa (2000). These include: face to face interaction, positive interdependence, interpersonal skills, individual accountability, and group processing. The one of which was of effective interpersonal skills by individual team members. This concept is expanded in module II with a focus on developing interpersonal skills for effective collaborative leadership. Activities are included to allow all students to practice and reflect upon their skills in listening and asking clarifying questions. The selection of these two skills is based upon the notion that the ability to listen well is fundamental to the effective use of all other interpersonal skills, while the skill of asking clarifying questions forms a basic foundation for effective problem-solving and conflict resolution skills. All members of collaborative teams need to be skilled in these ways, but leaders have a particular need to be highly effective communicators who can model excellent communication skills and support individuals and groups in further development of interpersonal skills. The module concludes by having participants complete a self-assessment and a plan of action outlining strategies for improving skills that emerge as areas of relative weakness.

Pre-Reading

It is recommended that instructors and participants read some or all of the following chapters prior to presentation of the module, as a way of familiarizing themselves with various descriptions of the stages of group development and the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions:

- Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2003). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals (4th edition)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. Chapters 4 (asking questions) and 6 (stages of team development)
- Pugach, M.C., & Johnson, L.J. (2002). *Collaborative practitioners, collaborative schools (2nd edition)*. Denver, Love Publishing. Chapters 4 (skills to facilitate collaboration, including clarifying) and 5 (barriers to effective communication)

- Wheelan, S. (1999). *Creating effective teams: A guide for members and leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Chapters 3 (overview of team development) and 7 – 10 (chapters on each of the four stages)

Alignment with the Four Tenets of Social Justice Articulated by the Institute

- *Developing school cultures that include all students.* Module II extends leaders' skills and analyzing teams' stages of development and functioning levels. Leaders who are able to recognize teams' strengths, challenges, and levels of development will be in a better position to support those teams for the overall purpose of establishing collaborative and inclusive school cultures. The module also focuses on helping leaders to develop their personal skills in communication and collaboration, again opening the way for them to expand their roles as leaders who can effect changes directed at supporting students with disabilities and those placed at-risk of school failure and their families.
- *Ensuring literacy for all learners.* Although the module does not directly address literacy, it focuses on enhancing leaders' skills in creating and supporting effective teams. Given that collaborative teams often focus on the task of improving school wide literacy, it follows that their work will be enhanced when improvement teams are functioning at the highest possible levels of team development.
- *Creating cultures of empowerment.* As was suggested in module I, an underlying premise of this set of modules is that collaboration is essential to creating cultures of empowerment. Leaders need to be skilled facilitators who can develop and use shared leadership models that promote the empowerment of teachers, community members, and collaborative teams. Through enhancing their personal skills in collaboration, as well as skills related to supporting teams throughout the four stages of development, school leaders who have successfully completed these modules may be in a better position to create cultures of empowerment within their schools.
- *Ensuring that family and community perspectives are at the heart of the culture of the school.* Effective collaboration serves as one of the primary processes for ensuring that families and community members experience meaningful participation and a sense of belonging to the school community. Module II seeks to enhance school leaders' interpersonal skills and their skills in supporting teams, with the ultimate aim being to create school cultures that embrace family and student perspectives and keep these at the center of change efforts.

Overview of Module II Activities

Module II has been designed to be delivered over two three hour class sessions; however, teaching time could be shortened or lengthened depending on the needs of the instructor and skills level of participants.

The agenda and suggested learning activities for this module are as follows:

Part I. Stages of Team Development

1. *Defining Stages of Team Development (1 hour)*
 - Group activity: *Highlights of the 4 stages*
 - Follow-up discussion: *Power Point I: Stages of Group Development*
2. *Case Studies: Applying Knowledge of the Stages of Team Development (1 ½ hours)*
 - Case study group activity: *Using real life case studies to determine stages of team development and identify areas for future growth*
 - Large group discussion: *Identifying the role of school leaders in supporting team development*
3. *Wrap-up and Reflection/Assessment (1/2 hour)*

Part II. Interpersonal Skills for Effective Collaboration

1. *Defining the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions (1/2 hour)*
2. *Activity in triads: Role plays with the skills of active listening and asking clarifying questions (45 minutes)*
3. *Developing plans to improve individual skills in collaboration and communication (1 hour)*
 - Individual activity: *Completion of skills self-assessment*
 - Activity in triads: *Discussion of individual skills and plan development*

4. Discussion: *Assessment of Implementation of Individual Skills Plan (1/2 hour)*
 - Paired activity: *Identification/Implementation of Plans for Peer Feedback on Individual Skills Plan*

Description of Activities for Part I: Stages of Team Development

1. Defining Stages of Team Development (1 hour)

The module begins with a 30 minute activity in which participants are asked to *define the stages of group development* based on pre-reading of the literature. Begin by breaking the group into four small groups and assigning one stage of development to each group. Each group should receive a large index card showing the name of one stage of development on the front, and a list of essential questions on the back, including:

- How does the literature define this stage of group development?
- If an outside observer were to watch a team at this stage of development, what would he/she notice about how the team is structured and functions? What strengths and challenges related to group functioning might be observed?
- What concerns might be held by members of this group?
- How might group leadership be perceived by the members of this group?
- What norms, skills, structures, and leadership activities might the group adopt or engage in to help it deal with challenges it is likely to encounter and ensure its continued development?
- Why is it important to understand this and other stages of team development?

Groups will need approximately 30 minutes to discuss their assigned stage of group development and answer the essential questions noted on the index card. Following small group discussions, each group is asked to share the results of the discussion with the larger group. This discussion may be supplemented and extended by having the instructor show *Power Point I: Stages of Group Development*. The power point presentation addresses the essential questions listed above, and shows terminology used by three authors to describe the four stages of group development. The power point presentation may also be copied and distributed to students in the form of an outline.

Instructor notes: The following are issues that may or may not come up through discussion, but which should be highlighted if they do not surface through group conversations.

- It is important to point out that while the stages may appear discreet and linear, they may in fact be more circular and intertwined in nature. That is, it is possible for a group in Stage 1 to identify and implement solid plans of action that look something like those developed by Stage 4 groups. The difference is, these plans may be developed by only one or

two group members, or individual group members may agree outwardly to a plan while harboring inner reservations. A Stage 4 group, on the other hand, might demonstrate an ability to solve problems and generate solutions in a highly collaborative manner, yet lack some of the organizational and structural elements (e.g., use of agendas, norms, and good follow-up) demonstrated by a Stage 1 group.

- Each of the possibilities outlined above points to the importance of a second tenet of collaboration, which is that it is of the utmost importance for groups to engage in an ongoing analysis of their strengths, challenges and progress in order to maximize their efficiency and level of collaboration. Moreover, they need to have ongoing discussions about the degree to which their stated purpose is central to their work. The failure to understand group purpose and/or to agree on a shared purpose is one of the most common reasons that groups fail to progress from one stage to another.
- Finally, it is important to acknowledge that theories of development need to be validated through practice, as it is possible that certain teams may operate in a highly collaborative fashion without having present all that is thought to be important in theories of group development. For example, some highly developed teams may find it possible to operate successfully without the use of all of the structures and processes suggested in the literature. In the end, the nature of a collaborative team is one that is defined through practice, conversation, and self-analysis more than by adherence to any single model of collaboration.

2. Case Study: Applying Knowledge of the Stages of Team Development (1 ½ hours)

The second half of the class session focuses on having students *apply their knowledge of team development to case study or real life situations*. Case study groups of 4 – 5 students each should be formed for the purposes of conducting an in-class analysis of cases. Three options exist for identifying cases for use in this activity:

- A case study with accompanying questions is provided in *Handout 1: Case Study of Stages of Group Development: Bellevue Middle School*. One or more groups may use and/or adapt this case study to complete the exercise and answer the questions that follow the case study.
- If the instructor and participants have used the previous module on collaboration (i.e., an *Introduction to Collaboration and Its Essential Elements*), case studies may be drawn from the team assessments that participants conducted using the “*Checklist for Collaborative Teams*” (See *Handout 2: Checklist for Effective Teams*, included with this activity). *Handout 3: Case Study Discussion Questions* is used after the case is presented as a way of focusing the discussion on the stages of group development.
- A third approach is to ask one student per case study group to volunteer to describe a team that they work with to a small group of their classmates. As above, it will be helpful if the student assigned to present the case study has

had time to complete the *Checklist for Effective Teams* prior to the class. Following the case study presentation, use *Handout 3: Case Study Discussion Questions* to focus the group discussion.

- As stated above, case study groups should consist of about 4 – 5 students per group. Groups will need about 45 minutes to review the case in relation to the four stages of team development and answer the discussion questions following the case study prepared for this activity, or those listed on *Handout 3: Case Study Discussion Questions*.

Following discussions in case study groups, the instructor facilitates a large group discussion in which each group shares the results of its discussion, and other groups comment on the degree to which they agree with team conclusions. As each group reports its results, the instructor publicly records the types of behaviors and supports that leaders might offer for a team in the relevant stage. Recording may be based on the framework provided in *Handout 4: Critical Behaviors and Supports Offered by Leaders in the Four Stages of Team Development*. Stages not identified through the large group discussion can be addressed by the group as a whole so that at the conclusion of the discussion, a complete matrix addressing each stage will be developed. In addition, the discussion should address ways in which different kinds of support may be needed when teams include parents, students, other family members, and /or professionals from outside of the school.

Instructor Notes: Wheelan (1999) provides some excellent suggestions regarding the role of leaders and leadership styles that may be helpful within each of the four stages. Some of these are identified on *Power Point 1: Stages of Team Development*, but additional ones may be added by the instructor during the creation of the matrix. Examples are included here:

3. *Wrap-up and Reflection (1/2 hour)*

During the final half hour of this session, participants will engage in a reflective writing exercise that focuses on applying and extending what they have learned about stages of team development to two essential questions. See *Handout 5: Questions for Reflection*, which includes a rubric for evaluating students' reflections.

- *Today's discussion has focused largely on the roles of adults in team development. What do you see as the benefits of understanding team development for students, especially those with disabilities and those placed at risk?*
- *Consider what you have learned about stages of team development from a systemic perspective. What organizational structures, strategies and supports need to be in place to enhance optimal team development as teams proceed through the four stages? In what ways will diversity, as it relates to diverse roles and backgrounds team members, need to be addressed through these structures, strategies, and supports?*

Description of Activities for Part II: Interpersonal Skills for Effective Collaboration

1. Defining the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions (20 minutes)

Part II of the module begins with a discussion of the skills of listening and asking clarifying questions. To begin, the class is divided into triads (note: the same triads will be used in the second activity). Half of the triads will be asked to discuss the skill of listening, while the other half will discuss the skills of asking clarifying questions.

- For triads discussing *listening*, ask each triad to prepare a “T-chart” in which students identify what good listening “sounds like” and “looks like.” See Example 1: *T-Chart*, for an example of the t-chart that has been completed for the skill of listening. While the question may seem an obvious one at first, discussions about listening should raise points related to the challenge of listening well, differences between active listening and listening to take in information, cultural differences related to listening, etc. Following completion of the T-chart, students also answer the question: *Why is listening so important in collaborative teams?*
- For triads discussing *asking clarifying questions*, ask each triad to record answers to the questions posed in Handout 6: *Asking Clarifying Questions*.

Triads will need about 5 – 10 minutes to complete their work. Following this, the instructor facilitates a brief discussion in which each triad shares the content of its discussion.

2. Activity in triads: Role plays with the skills of active listening and asking clarifying questions (45 minutes)

Once definitions of and the rationale for focusing on listening and asking clarifying questions has been established, students return to their triads for a brief “communication skills workshop” to practice those same skills.

- **Instructor notes:** There are, of course, numerous skills that could be considered fundamental to successful collaborative teaming. The skills of listening and asking clarifying questions have been selected for this activity of the following reasons:
 - i. *Listening* may be the most basic skill of all as it pertains to successful communication and collaboration, yet it is a skill that eludes many of us. It’s important to define what listening is, how it may be expressed differently in different cultures and sub-cultures, and how failure to listen well is often the source of “communication breakdowns” in teams. Most professionals find that listening is a skill they need to practice often, as many of us (especially those in education and human services) are inclined to want to solve problems and “fix things” too soon. In skipping over deep listening to others’ problems, we deny others the opportunity to express their point of view, express (vent) anger, and to feel the

sense of value and empowerment that comes when others listen well to us.

- ii. The skill of *asking clarifying questions* is closely related to listening, because clarifying questions help to keep the listening process active, and help to keep the listener from jumping too quickly to solution-finding. Much of the literature on problem-solving discusses the need to spend a great deal of time in problem identification and in formulating a problem statement. This cannot be done without the step of asking clarifying questions, in which the listeners(s) pause before finding solutions to gain additional information and a clear sense of how the problem is being perceived from various viewpoints.
- iii. The role plays included in *Role Play Activity* address listening and asking clarifying questions in one-on-one situations rather than in collaborative teams. This is done purposefully, so as to allow practice in triads in which one listener and one speaker can fully engage in the activity while a third person listens. In each role play situation, a school leader is being challenged to listen to a teacher or family member express deep concerns about something of great importance to them. The goal of the activity is to have the “leader” listen and ask clarifying questions without proceeding to solution – finding in this particular situation. If the instructor wishes, the role play situations provided may be eliminated in favor of having students tell similar stories from their professional experiences. The following prompt may be used to elicit stories: “Tell us about something that happened this week that was challenging for you. Your story should be one that you want others to listen to and which may evoke some strong feelings for you as you tell the story.”
- iv. Following completion of the role play activity, ask participants to comment on what aspects of the activity they found most helpful, surprising, and/or difficult. Often, this exercise results in participants commenting on the degree to which it is difficult to listen without judgment and/or without wanting to offer solutions. A discussion question that may be used at the conclusion of this activity is: *At what point during a difficult discussion does a listener move from allowing another to vent to either stopping the conversation or searching for a collaboratively identified solution?*

3. Individual activity: “Whip Around” and *Completion of skills self-assessment (15 minutes)*

The remaining portion of the class session is to be spent on developing individual plans for the improvement of collaboration skills. Having been introduced to the essential elements of collaboration, the stages of team development, and two essential skills in collaboration, participants are ready to identify critical collaboration skills that they wish

to improve upon as leaders of collaborative skills. Identification of skills is an individual decision; however, as a prompt for thinking about critical skills, participants engage in a “whip around” in which the instructor asks each participant in the class to quickly state a skill that they consider essential for effective collaborative leadership. Responses may be recorded on flip chart paper, a white board, etc. so that all can see them. Next, the instructor asks participants to refer to *Handout7: Collaborative Teams: Assessment of Individual and Group Functioning*, which they will now use as an assessment measure for identifying skills that are strengths as well as those indicating a need for improvement. Following completion of the assessment measure, participants should identify three skills for which they will develop and implement an action plan. The action plan will include one goal to be developed for each skill area and two implementation strategies per goal. Development of the action plan may then be documented in a weekly reflective journal and monitored by the instructor and/or a peer over a period of weeks to determine the degree to which participants have been successful in reaching their goals (see item 6 in this activity for a full description of the monitoring and feedback process).

4. Individual activity: *Developing plans to improve individual skills in collaboration and communication hour (1/2 hour)*

As identified in *Handout 8: Individual Collaborative Skills Action Plan and Journal*, the action plan is developed based on the three skills identified by participants in the assessment described above. For each of the three skills, participants are to provide a rationale for selecting that skill and develop a related goal stating the ways in which they would like to improve upon that skill over a period of time. Two strategies for promoting achievement of the goal are also to be developed. For example, a participant might choose the skill of “listening during team meetings” as an area to be further developed. Following a narrative outlining the reasons for selecting this skill, a related goal such as “I will improve my ability to listen fully to statements being made by teachers and parents during team meetings, without interruptions” could be developed. Strategies for promoting achievement of this goal might include asking a colleague to give a pre-determined sign when the participant is taking too much, using “wait time” before speaking up so as to allow others to speak first, refraining from offering ideas by encouraging others to do the same, etc. One half hour has been set aside for this activity so as to allow participants ample time to develop goals and strategies. If desired, participants may choose to work in pairs to work on the wording of goals and development of related strategies. A sample plan is included at the conclusion of this module. See *Example 2: Sample Action Plan*

5. Activity in triads: *Discussion of individual skills and plan development (1/2 hour)*

Following conclusion of the plans described above, participants re-group in triads to spend a total of about 20 minutes discussing their plans. The goal of this discussion is to allow participants time to share their plans with others and to receive feedback that may help in the revision or re-framing of goals and strategies. Each participant should begin this process by stating the three skills they have chosen to work on, describing their rationale for selecting each one, and sharing goals and strategies so that peers can offer feedback and additional suggestions. Participants should be reminded to practice their best skills in listening and asking clarifying questions as they complete this activity!

During the last 10 minutes of the activity, the entire group may be re-assembled to allow each person to quickly share their goals and strategies. This will allow participants to hear what their peers have identified as critical skills, to look for common elements among the plans, and to compare the final list of skills with those generated earlier in the whip-around.

6. Discussion: *Assessment of Implementation of Individual Skills Plan (15 minutes)*
 - Paired activity: *Identification/Implementation of Plans for Peer Feedback on Individual Skills Plan*

As a closing activity, the instructor and participants make plans for the implementation of the journal process. As stated above, the journal activity will be most successful if it is spread out over a period of 8 – 12 weeks, during which time at least one entry is completed per week. Feedback on the journals is critical and may be given in several ways. One option is for the instructor to provide individual feedback on each journal entry, preferably through email correspondence. A second option is to have participants work in pairs to provide regular written or verbal feedback to one another, with completed journals and summaries of peer feedback to be shared with the instructor at the conclusion of the allotted journal writing time. A criteria sheet for evaluating completed journals is provided in *Handout 8*. Instructors will note that a summary reflection is suggested as a way for participants to reflect on their overall progress through the journal writing activity. At the conclusion of the journal writing activity, participants may be asked to share their “major learning” with peers and to identify the degree to which this activity has helped them to improve their skills in collaborative leadership for the benefit of colleagues, family members, and students in their schools. In particular, they should be asked to reflect on the degree to which improvements in their skills as collaborative leaders appears to be enhancing outcomes for children with disabilities and those placed at risk for academic failure. Participants who may be engaging in internship experiences may use the journals as a starting point for identifying additional skills and action plans that will continue their journey towards development as collaborative leaders.

Annotated Reference List

Friend, M., & Cook, L. (2003). *Interactions: Collaboration skills for school professionals* (4th edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Interactions is a “must read” for anyone interested in the topic of collaboration. Friend and Cook provide an excellent overview of the historical and theoretical roots of collaboration, as well as practical, skill-based chapters covering topics such as interpersonal communication, team dynamics, interpersonal problem solving, and difficult interactions. In addition, chapters on co-teaching, working with families, and working with paraeducators provide teachers and administrators with strategies for practicing collaboration in a variety of contexts. While the book refers often to adult-adult interactions related to collaborating on behalf of students with disabilities, school practitioners of all types will find its contents relevant and useful.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers’ work and culture in the postmodern age*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

While somewhat dated in terms of its year of publication, Hargreaves’ vision of a truly collaborative school embracing postmodern perspectives always sparks excellent discussions and a refreshing opportunity to re-frame how we think about collaboration and the structure of schools. Part three, *Culture*, provides some thought-provoking reading on the potential pitfalls of collaboration and the need to avoid substituting true collaboration for “contrived collegiality.”

Idol, L., Paolucci-Whitcomb, P., & Nevin, A. (1986). *Collaborative consultation*. Rockville, MD: Aspen Publishers.

This book is considered to be a classic in the field of collaboration, in that it outlines a specific approach to collaboration among special and general educators for the purpose of serving students with disabilities in general education settings. Its focus leans more heavily on the side of special education than will be appreciated by some; still its approach to collaboration and problem-solving underlies much of how we practice collaboration in a wider variety of contemporary settings.

Johnson, L.J., Pugach, M.C., & Hammittee, D. (1988). Barriers to effective special education consultation. *Remedial and Special Education*, 9 (6), 41 – 47.

This article will be of interest to those wishing to further explore the roots of collaborative practice in schools and the shift that was made in special education from a behaviorally-based consultation model to the more collaborative model embraced today in partnerships between general and special educators.

Lambert, L. (1998). *Building leadership capacity in schools*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Lambert's book addresses the need to build leadership capacity in our schools in order to build a sense of shared responsibility and purpose of community. In her view, "leadership is about learning together, and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively" (p. 5). While this book is less concerned with specific processes and skills related to collaboration than others, it provides excellent examples of schools that have been successful in broadening their base of leadership by promoting dialogue, shared learning, and a collaborative approach to improving schools.

Pugach, M.C., & Johnson, L. (2002). *Collaborative practitioners, collaborative schools* (2nd edition). Denver: Love Publishing.

Collaborative practitioners, collaborative schools is an aptly titled book, in that it combines a focus on the development of individual and team skills in collaboration with a more systemic view of the ways in which schools can develop and support a variety of collaborative structures. Written in a highly readable style, the book includes short case studies that allow readers to quickly apply concepts being discussed, as well as applied activities following each chapter. The book contains three excellent chapters on communication skills and barriers to effective communication, as well as chapters highlighting collaborative teaching models and school, family and community partnerships. Its practical and applied approach has broad appeal for both teachers and administrators who are interested in using collaborative practices to address the needs of students with disabilities and those placed at-risk.

Rubin, H. (2002). *Collaborative leadership.: Developing effective partnerships in communities and schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rubin writes that "this is a simple book intended to help leaders lead, teachers teach, and intellectuals to think more effectively with and about collaboration" (p. xii). His intent is to create a dialogue with readers aimed at understanding a relational and collaborative approach to leadership that promotes "meaningful public engagement and broadly inclusive participation in public education" (p. xii). The book's focus on understanding collaboration and collaborative leadership through theory, practice, and reflection makes it important and relevant reading for leaders wishing to promote social justice by working with others to support the needs of children, families, and communities.

Turnbull, R., Turnbull, A., Shank, M., & Smith, S.J. (2004). *Exceptional lives: Special education in today's schools* (4th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.

This expansive and detailed text on special education serves as an excellent resource for teachers and administrators who need to know about special education. While its focus is much broader than the topic of collaboration, it embraces collaboration as a guiding principle and a necessary condition for promoting inclusive approaches to educating students with disabilities and those placed at-risk. It contains hundreds of additional resources, including websites, that may be useful to administrators who would like to broaden their general knowledge of special education, school reform, and collaboration.

Villa, R., Thousand, J., Stainback, W., & Stainback, S. (1992). *Restructuring for caring and effective education: An administrative guide to creating heterogeneous schools*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

This book is another of the “classics” on collaboration, containing detailed information on the principles and processes associated with collaborative teaming for the purpose of promoting the success of *all* learners. Its chapter on collaborative teams is included in the module as a pre-reading activity, as it provides a series of excellent descriptions and examples of structures and collaborative processes needed for effective teaming. Like Hargreaves’ book, it is dated in terms of its year of publication, yet relevant for administrators concerned with promoting successful outcomes among students with disabilities and those placed at-risk of school failure.

Wheelan, S. A. (1999). *Creating effective teams: A guide for members and leaders*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wheelan’s book provides yet another practical approach to promoting effective teaming in organizations. Her perspective comes from the private sector, which makes it interesting reading for educational administrators. In addition, she explores concepts such as the stages of team development (see also Friend and Cook, and Villa et al.) in relation to specific leadership styles. The book provides multiple checklists that allow administrators to assess their effectiveness in relation to various stages of team development, as well as specific strategies for encouraging optimal development among teams. As such, the book is highly recommended for leaders interested in exploring practical approaches to creating effective collaborative teams throughout an organization.

Additional Citations and Resources

Stages of Group Development

Tuckman, B (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63, 384-399.

Tuckman, B., & Jensen, M. (1977). Stages of small group development. *Group and Organizational Studies*, 2, 419-427.

See also a description of the four stages on the web available through George Mason University, at www.gmu.edu/student/csl/5stages

Families, Diversity and Collaboration

Callicott, K.J. Culturally sensitive collaboration within person-centered planning. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 18 (1), 60 – 68.

Harry, B. (1992). Restructuring the participation of African-American parents in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 59 (2), 123- 131.

Furney, K.S., & Salembier, G. (2000). Rhetoric and reality: A review of the literature on parent and student participation in the IEP and transition planning process. *Issues influencing the future of transition programs and services in the United States*. Minneapolis, MN: National Transition Network at the Institute on Community Integration.

Kalyanapur, M., & Harry, B. (1997). A posture of reciprocity: A practical approach to collaboration between parents and professionals of culturally diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 6, 487- 509.

Lake, J.F., & Billingsley, B.S. (2000). An analysis of factors that contribute to parent-school conflict in special education. *Remedial and Special Education*, 21 (4), 240 – 251.

Lopez, G.R., Scribner, J.D., & Mahitivanichcha, K. (2002). Redefining parent involvement: Lessons from high-performing migrant-impacted schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38 (2), 253-288.

Lovitt, T.C., & Cushing, S. (1999). Parents of youth with disabilities: Their perceptions of school programs. *Remedial and Special Education*, 20 (3), 134 – 142.

Muscott, H.S. (2002). Exceptional partnerships: Listening to the voices of families. *Preventing School Failure*, 46 (2), 66 – 69.

Rao, S.S. (2000). Perspectives of an African-American mother on parent-professional relationships in special education. *Mental Retardation*, 38 (6), 475-488.

Shapiro, J., Monzo, L.D., Rueda, R., Gomez, J.A., & Blacher, J. (2004). Alienated advocacy: Perspectives of Latina mothers of young adults with developmental disabilities on service systems. *Mental Retardation*, 42 (1), 37 – 54.

Zhang, C., & Bennett, T. (2003). Facilitating the meaningful participation of culturally and linguistically diverse families in the IFSP and IEP process. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 18 (1), 51- 59.

Collaboration, Leadership, and Community Schools

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