

*Thank you*

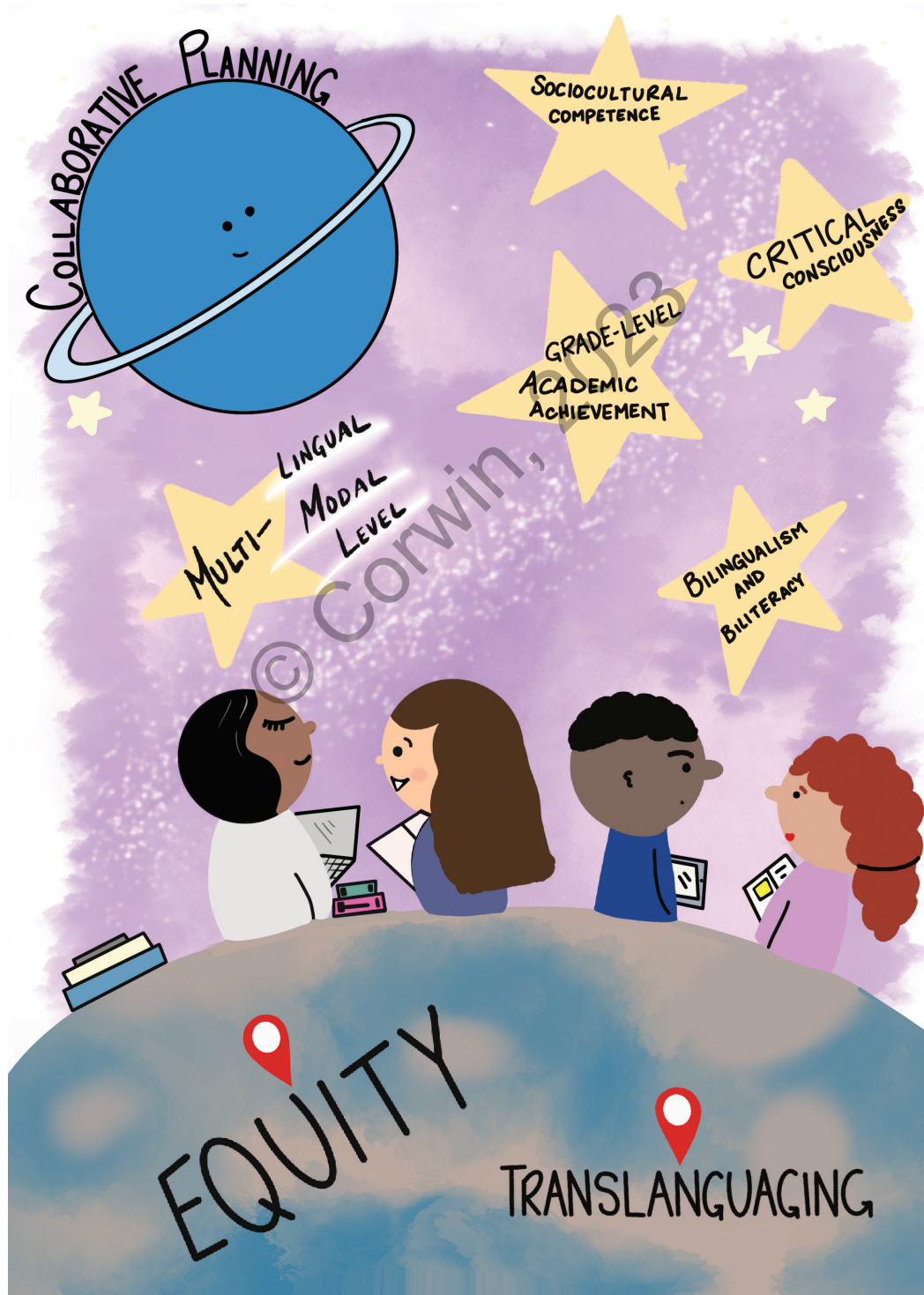
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# Collaborative Planning in Dual Language Programs

# 3



“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

—Dr. Wayne Dyer

## MISSION CONTROL



Collaborative planning is an essential component of dual language programs regardless of the model of instruction. Partnering teachers and other members of the school community collaborate for the sake of their multilingual learners. This chapter defines the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *how*, and *why* of collaborative planning and offers actionable recommendations and tools to support co-planning in the dual language context. More specifically, the goals of Chapter 3 are to:

1. Define the essential elements of collaborative planning in the dual language classroom
2. Identify the purpose and key practices of co-planning using the four pillars of dual language instruction
3. Review and evaluate collaborative planning protocols and tools

## EXPLORATION



Before we launch our exploration into collaborative planning, let's look at this topic from the perspectives of one student and her teachers in a Vietnamese–English fourth-grade dual language classroom. We wish to elevate these voices here by briefly sharing their experiences and invite you to consider them through your own lens as well as through some key research findings.

### Through a Student's Eyes

*My name is Minh, and I am in the fourth grade. I love going to school. I am excited to see my friends, even if sometimes I am a bit nervous in class. I know I must do well in school. My teachers and my parents both expect me to learn as much as I can, both in Vietnamese and in English. I started in a Vietnamese dual language program in kindergarten where half of the students spoke Vietnamese and the others spoke English [a two-way program]. I was born in the United States, but both my parents came here from Vietnam when they were much younger. My grandma only speaks Vietnamese, and our culture and language are very important to the family. My name Minh means “clever, intelligent person” in Vietnamese, and I know my family wants to make smart choices for me and wants me to have a better life in America.*

And here is what her teachers think about Minh:

*Minh enjoys that she gets to use both her languages at school. She can read and write in Vietnamese with just as much confidence as she does in English; she has friends whose home languages are English, Spanish, and Vietnamese and enjoys learning with them and from them. She prefers writing poetry in Vietnamese, though, whereas science reports and social studies document-based analyses come with more ease in English. Recently she began to be more conscious of—and occasionally even puzzled by—the significant differences between her two languages. For example, the adjectives must follow nouns in Vietnamese, while adjectives come first in English. Words like easy-peasy, super-duper, and goody-goody are rare and playful in English, but such repetitive or rhyming reduplicative use of words is quite common in Vietnamese, offering a refinement or a new shade of meaning of the original word.*

*She has long noticed how the dialect her family uses slightly differs from that of her teachers and the teaching assistant: Originally from Can Tho in southern Vietnam, her family uses five tones; her teachers and the teaching assistant (both from northern regions) apply six tones, but she can easily comprehend and communicate with everyone. She looks forward to making some of these comparisons in class, with her family, or on her own and lights up each time she can make some new discoveries for herself about what languages can do and how her two languages and dialects work.*

Minh is developing metalinguistic awareness about her languages and dialects both intuitively and through her participation in a dual language program. As Ofelia García (2014) also notes, “language is an inseparable part of all human action, intimately connected to all other forms of action, physical, social and symbolic. Language is a set of practices that express agency, embodied and embedded in the environment” (p. 149). Knowing this, what might be the unique role teacher collaboration can play in supporting Minh’s dual language development?

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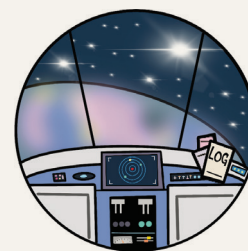


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## CAPTAIN’S LOG



## Through the Educators’ Eyes

*We are Minh’s fourth-grade partner teachers. We also work with a part-time bilingual teaching assistant, and all three of us meet regularly during our assigned weekly collaborative planning time. We have been looping with the class since third grade, so this is the second year we are working together as a team in support of the same two-way dual language class. Our official planning time is limited to two periods per week combined with*

*our lunch period, so we often do “lunch and plan,” too. We like to look back at the previous week and compare notes about how students make progress in the core content areas across the two languages, as well as in their cross-cultural understandings and critical thinking. In our collaborative conversations, we discuss ways to infuse our students’ cultural heritage in the curriculum and are attentive to their emerging bicultural identities. We frequently survey our students to get input from them and guide them to set goals for themselves.*

*To make our planning time more efficient, we look at available formative student data and review the appropriate curriculum and scope and sequence guides prior to our common meeting time. When we sit down to plan, we like to start with some brief celebrations (or noticings) before we take a deeper dive into the upcoming lessons. Early on, we have established several classroom protocols for instructional consistency that we periodically revisit such as beginning- and end-of-day routines, processes for transitioning from large-group to small-group instruction, and clear expectations for self- and peer assessment and goal setting that students regularly engage in. We also made an agreement that we will not stress if we cannot finish planning everything on the spot: Instead, we will work on making some deliberate overarching decisions regarding goals and objectives, as well as key instructional practices that support the development of content, language, literacy, cultural and critical consciousness, and ways our students can demonstrate their new learning through key activities, tasks, and projects. We make sure our teaching assistant has meaningful tasks in each lesson. Then we hash out roles and responsibilities during our planning period and finish planning using a shared Google Drive on our own.*

## WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS

Intentional planning and collaborative conversations about students’ simultaneous development of academic, linguistic, cross-cultural, and critical consciousness are key to success. We chose two key points from current research to connect to this scenario. One invites explicit focus on planning for metalinguistic awareness, and the other reminds us of the importance of collaborating to ensure that students engage in self- and peer assessment and goal setting with clear expectations (see Chapter 5 for more on this):

According to WIDA (2020), “The explicit teaching of how language works can help multilingual learners expand what they can do with language, thereby growing their language toolbox. We want our students to become increasingly aware and strategic in their use of language to negotiate meaning and achieve their purposes in various contexts” (p. 20).

Margo Gottlieb (2021) emphasizes the importance of collaborating to engage multilingual learners: “From the first day to the close of the school year, students should be participants in classroom instruction and assessment” (p. 14).

**How are these ideas from current research reflected in the collaborative planning vignette from Minh’s partner teachers? How could they be further strengthened during co-planning time?**

### Ready to Launch the Exploration

Common sense, evidence-based practice, and empirical research all support the notion that dual language programs cannot thrive without sustained teacher collaboration. In this section, we will explore the key questions that arise related to collaborative planning—*who, what, when, where, why, and how*—to ensure impactful program implementation and consistent and rigorous yet highly supportive learning experiences for all students.

### Who Collaborates With Whom?

While partner teachers are expected to closely work together, collaboration may involve several educators in a dual language context. Some collaborations may be regularly scheduled and sustained; others may only occur occasionally or on an as-needed basis. Consider the following list and reflect on what collaboration may look like in each of the scenarios when partner teachers collaborate with:

- Each other and other dual language partnerships
- Teaching assistants or paraprofessionals assigned to their class
- Other grade-level teachers (on the elementary level)
- Other content-area teachers (on the secondary level)
- Other bilingual and dual language educators
- English language development (ELD) specialists
- Special education teachers
- Instructional coaches
- Instructional leaders and administrators
- Parents or guardians
- Community liaisons or other members of the larger linguistic community

Collaboration may greatly vary in each case: Collaborating with teaching assistants may focus on the effective and efficient day-to-day management of resources, connecting with parents invites a two-way dialogue about their children's progress, and collaborating with instructional coaches allows for self-assessment, goal setting, and ongoing, job-embedded professional learning opportunities for the team. We fully embrace what Margarita Calderón and her colleagues (2019) also claim: "The success of dual language programs depends on collaboration between teachers, administrators, and students. In a dual language school, teachers are well-prepared to co-teach and students to co-learn" (p. 163). So, collaboration may even be perceived to be the norm; do you agree?

## What Is Collaborative Planning?

For our purposes, this is how we are going to define *collaborative planning*: Also referred to as *co-planning*, it is a process that supports the consistent, high-quality implementation of standards-aligned language and core content curricula alongside developing cultural and critical consciousness while allowing dual language educators and other collaborating educators (such as special education teachers, teaching assistants, paraprofessionals, instructional specialists, and others) the opportunity to coordinate and refine their plans for instruction and assessment (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2022).

### CAPTAIN'S LOG



Did you have the same definition of *co-planning* in mind before you began reading this book? Reflect on the following list of ideas we gleaned from working with or interviewing collaborating dual language educators. Do you embrace any of the same notions?

#### Co-planning is:

- An agreement to welcome the use of both languages for co-planning purposes and to create an equitable, inclusive work environment for the partnership
- A joint commitment to excellence in both languages
- Critically listening to each other and building a trusting professional relationship
- An establishment of shared goals, learning intentions, and measurable outcomes for all students
- A concerted effort to make sure all students are developing academic, linguistic, and cultural competence in two languages
- An endeavor among educators to ensure that grade-level standards are met while equity of languages and cultural understandings are addressed
- An opportunity to leverage multilingualism

What else may be an important aspect of co-planning? How do you define collaborative planning for your team?

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Consistent, intentional collaboration—especially co-planning—cannot happen in a vacuum. Administrators and collaborating educators must work together to create the logistical support for collaborative planning. When teachers have the opportunity to work together for sustained amounts of time, on a regular basis, with clear goals and agendas in place, their collaborative efforts, creativity, and professional commitment to the goals of dual language education must be recognized and appreciated. For effective teacher collaboration, ample time is needed, so as collaborating educators, you could share:

- Personal and professional beliefs and evidence-based best practices
- Commitment to the practice of collaboration and support for your partnership
- Expertise in content, knowledge of literacy and language development, cultural understanding, and pedagogical skills
- Instructional resources and bilingual supplementary materials that are scaffolded and differentiated
- Appropriate technology tools and creative ways to meaningfully integrate them into the curriculum
- Instructional strategies that represent research-informed practices for critical engagement
- Approaches to collaboratively teaching your classes (if applicable)
- Ways to group your students and optimize the learning space(s) available for instructional delivery

### **When and Where Does Collaborative Planning Take Place?**

While teachers and administrators alike recognize the importance and value of collaborative planning, their most frequently cited concerns seem to be related to its logistics. Time often proves to be the greatest barrier. Yet, when we fully commit to allow for common planning time during the regular school day by building co-planning sessions into our master schedules, we alleviate the pressure on teachers and their assistants to figure out when and how they can find time to co-plan. When collaboration time is secured prior to or at the beginning of the academic year, teachers can work on mapping out the curriculum for the year. Revisiting and revising these curriculum maps periodically (such as at the beginning of each quarter) ensures a closer alignment between the planned or intended and the actual, taught curriculum.



## WHAT PRACTITIONER RESEARCHERS SAY

Shera Simpson and Elizabeth Howard (2021) suggest starting the year with a co-planning map that helps streamline the collaborative planning and aid in the complex decision-making process:

*The co-planning map asks tandem teachers to consider both the “what” and the “when” of co-planning for the year. First, you and your partner teacher brainstorm all of the recurring activities that you will need to work on together in the technical domains of co-teaching (curriculum, instruction, assessment, family communication, and classroom management), as well as the interpersonal aspects of your co-teaching relationship . . . You then take those activities and determine the “when” of co-planning, by distinguishing co-planning topics that need to be addressed weekly (such as lesson pacing) from those that require less frequent—but perhaps more intensive—discussion (such as curriculum mapping), as well as those that require ongoing attention through asynchronous tasks that partner teachers take care of on their own time. (para. 4)*

**What tools have you used to map out your collaboration or co-planning?**

Collaboration may take place in person or virtually, synchronously and asynchronously. Prior to 2020, most educators opted for face-to-face meetings for collaboration. The global crisis that the COVID-19 pandemic brought about resulted in some significant shifts in the way we use technology for teaching and collaboration. One silver lining of virtual or hybrid teaching and learning turned out to be that teacher collaboration and co-planning also went online: Most teachers we work with agree that examining standards and other resources, reviewing and aligning curriculum maps, co-planning units and lessons, sharing ideas and best practices, and co-developing instructional materials can be accomplished virtually with a lot more ease.

## WHAT PRACTITIONERS SAY

Vanessa Aspiazu and Sean Kennedy are fifth-grade dual language educators in Port Chester Public Schools in New York. This is what they shared about the dynamic relationship and communication patterns they have established as well as finding time over the years:

*We just communicate whenever we need to. It is very fluid, and we obviously—yes, we do have our boundaries and whatnot—but because we’ve been together for so long, it’s just very easy to shoot each other a text. We communicate routinely every Friday, when we send each other a really long email to just update one another on the classes that we’ve been with for the week so that we can start preparing for*

*the incoming class, so it is very fluid. We call, text, Zoom, email. In person, we just stop by each other's rooms. It's awesome! We just walk into each other's rooms, a lot, because things pop up all the time and sometimes it's not that easy to communicate. Well, it's just kind of an open-door policy and reminding each other, "We have to do this!"*

**How does Vanessa and Sean's communication resemble yours with your partner teachers?**

### **Why Is Collaborative Planning Necessary in Dual Language Programs?**

Collaborative curriculum development and collaborative planning (also referred to as co-planning) have been well established across grade levels, content areas, and instructional programs (e.g., Sleeter & Carmona, 2017). For example, special education inclusion as a program design and inclusive instructional choices for students with disabilities have decades of research and implementation grounded on the practice of collaboration among general and special education teachers (Beninghof, 2020; Friend & Cook, 2012; Murawski & Lochner, 2017; Peery, 2019; Villa et al., 2013). Collaborative service delivery models for English learners have been recognized as a way to ensure equity (Yoon, 2022) and to offer similar benefits by integrating content and language development (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010, 2012a, 2015, 2019). Intentional planning has been at the core of all these initiatives (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2022).

Professional learning communities (PLCs) call on teams of teachers to engage in sustained collaboration and co-planning (DuFour & DuFour, 2012; DuFour et al., 2016; Marzano et al., 2018; Mattos et al., 2016). Establishing shared goals and committing to ongoing joint professional explorations are among the hallmarks of the PLC movement supporting both teacher agency and shared ownership of evolving pedagogies.

By design, many dual language programs are based on a partnership between two or more educators who come to the practice with language, literacy, and cultural knowledge and skills in their respective languages and combine their expertise through regular collaboration and co-planning. At other times, dual language teachers forge additional partnerships and collaborate with ELD teachers, who may provide additional language instruction, or special education teachers (such as occupational and physical therapy providers, speech–language pathologists, and other support personnel), who may offer in-class support to ensure that students' complex academic, linguistic, sociocultural, and social-emotional needs are met.

Collaboration in dual language programs demands both commitment and healthy risk-taking in the interest of promoting biliteracy development. Collaborating dual language teachers will be more effective when they each have a basic understanding

of the partner languages' oracy and literacy patterns. In dual language settings, collaborative planning obliges conversations regarding each language's communication patterns for various language functions, both spoken and in writing. For example, in English, students are often expected to "get straight to the point" in their productive domains of communication. Ideas are expressed in a linear fashion. In other languages such as Diné, Mandarin, and Spanish, the communication patterns are much less linear. Students would perhaps be expected to express ideas and knowledge in a culturally decorated and/or circular pattern (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

### CAPTAIN'S LOG



From the critically conscious view, collaborative planning must include some "prickly" yet very necessary conversations on the topics of curricular materials, representation, access, and equitable participation. Choose one of the following questions for your reflection:

How will students be able to see themselves in literature and anchor text selections, in both languages? How will students who speak the minority language have equal access to leading discussions?

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### WHAT PRACTITIONERS SAY

Teacher collaboration to support dynamic bilingual, bicultural, and biliteracy development could cause a cosmic shift in school culture, which we learned about when we interviewed Mats Haaland, director of English as an additional language (EAL), and Chelsea Wilson, director of teaching and learning, at Nansha College Preparatory Academy, a secondary immersion school in China. This is what Mats had to share:

*A few years ago, we pivoted toward having far more structure and support for our collaborative co-teaching teams by ensuring that our master schedule provided teachers with ample co-planning time and aligning their schedules for intentional co-teaching. Our EAL specialists have really flourished with this added support by becoming fully recognized members of their teaching teams. They have been able to consistently integrate their language acquisition expertise with our curriculum so that our students' needs as multilingual learners can be met consistently in the classroom.*

Chelsea added:

*One thing that I've been really, really happy to see on our campus is that we have seven learning teams that are being led by seven different members of faculty this semester. We have visitations happening as part of those learning teams where we have lots of people going into each other's classrooms to just take a look and see what's happening—what they can pull into their own instructional practice. I have people send me messages all the time saying, "Hey, I'd really like to get into someone's classroom to see X. Who is doing something like this that I can see?" So, we've moved toward this place where people recognize that their most valuable learning opportunities are their colleagues. And that is, I think, really powerful to have as a staff culture.*

**What challenges do you think Mats and Chelsea had to overcome to ensure everyone is on board with this new initiative?**

### How Do Dual Language Educators Co-Plan?

Based on the four pillars of dual language education, we present a four-dimensional collaborative planning framework (see Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3.1 Four-Dimensional Planning in Dual Language Classrooms**



When all four dimensions are considered together, collaborative planning maximizes teacher effectiveness and meaningfully impacts students' language acquisition and literacy learning in both languages. In addition, students' grade-appropriate core content knowledge and skills develop along with sociocultural understanding and critical consciousness. Co-planning is vitally important whether your team includes dual language partnering teachers or additional service providers such as special education

teachers with or without the opportunity to co-deliver instruction. Collaborative planning upholds all other work that is done in the dual language classroom.

How do your students benefit from collaborative planning? In a purposefully planned lesson, they will:

- Receive rich, multidimensional, culturally and linguistically responsive, and sustaining curricula across the content areas
- Participate in instruction based on multilevel, differentiated unit and lesson plans
- Engage in learning tasks that integrate content, language and literacy development, sociocultural competence, and social-emotional growth
- Build cross-cultural understanding and positive identity development
- Develop critical understanding of and engagement with complex concepts (especially related to social justice and equity)

To establish a shared understanding of the four pillars, we invite partnering dual language teachers and other collaborating educators to discuss their beliefs and overarching goals for their students. You can use the *Co-Planning Pillars and Priorities Crosswalk Grid* in Figure 3.2 to develop a shared understanding of the four pillars and establish shared priorities for the upcoming school year regarding the curriculum, instruction, assessment, and community building.

**Figure 3.2 Co-Planning Pillars and Priorities Crosswalk Grid**

PRIORITIES → PILLARS ↓	CURRICULUM	INSTRUCTION	ASSESSMENT	COMMUNITY BUILDING
Bilingualism and Biliteracy				
Grade-Level Academic Achievement				
Sociocultural Competence				
Critical Consciousness				

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If you design your own co-agreement, you and your colleagues can jointly decide what to prioritize; most partner teachers tend to focus on building partnerships, determining routines and structures, establishing collaboration norms and commitments, and mutually agreeing on some other critical points (see Figure 3.3 for an excerpt from the *Partnering for Literacy Success* document that includes essential mindsets, as well as teacher and leadership agreements, from Matt Hajdun and his team at the Columbus School in Envigado, Colombia).

**Figure 3.3** Biliteracy Agreement for Partnering for Literacy Success at the Columbus School in Envigado, Colombia

**Essential Mindsets:**

- As bilingual learners, our students have double the assets, not half.
  - Asset-based vs. deficit-based
- All students are capable of learning additional languages.
  - Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset
- We are all literacy teachers.
  - Team teachers vs. language teachers
- Students must make frequent connections between partner languages with equity and balance.
  - Integration vs. two monolingual approaches
- Collective efficacy has the greatest impact on student learning.
  - Team teaching vs. individual islands

*Source:* Matt Hajdun. Used with permission.

## NAVIGATION SYSTEMS



Collaborative planning cannot be accomplished on the fly! Due to the complex nature of co-planning and the significant impact it has on instruction and assessment, it may be best approached through two lenses: First, let's zoom out and establish some co-planning essentials and anchor strategies that support long-term planning; next, let's zoom in and refine our co-planning practices to ensure successful day-to-day collaborations!