

Two Teacher classroom

DRAFT August 2014

Central idea: The integrated curriculum asks one teacher to teach all five or six subjects (like the elementary school teacher)

Modification for Two Teachers

Two Teachers Split the Work: *If you don't feel confident about teaching the entire curriculum to a group of students, what if you split the curriculum with another teacher? Each teacher would have three subjects and this will let the teacher see 50 or 60 students per week instead of the typical 150 to 180 students.*

That's the core of the "Two-Teacher School." If we limit the number of students that a teacher is asked to face and evaluate, then the teacher can learn more about each student.

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introduction

this is how I introduced the Two-Teacher School" to my principal

Ms. Robinson

I have been thinking about how the routine might work in IGeneration and I wonder if this concept of one teacher covering three subjects would allow that teacher to get to know a small group of students really well. I'd like to discuss this further with you.

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The Integrated Curriculum

Two Teachers split the subjects between them.

Traditional format

each teacher teaches a separate subject. a typical load is 150 students, 6 classes of 25 students.

Integrated Curriculum: One teacher

One teacher sees 25 students and teaches all 6 subjects (this is the elementary school model)

Modified Integrated Curriculum: Two Teachers

Two teachers split the subjects

Each teacher covers 3 subjects and they share 50 students
(two classes of 25 students)

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There's a school in Providence, Rhode Island, where one teacher teaches all six subjects to the same group of 15 students for four years. The "integrated curriculum" is presented through projects, which allows the student to explore math, science, history, literature and ethics through

The students' interests and passions are further developed and explored with internships with local businesses.

Putting Littky's advice into practice

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Here are six important books, each with a part to play in giving advice to teachers who want to use the integrated curriculum.

The Big Picture by Dennis Littky gives stories to inspire people

Personalizing the High School by Clarke and DiMartino give procedures for teachers to use.

One Kid at a Time by Eliot Levine gives specific projects

Leaving to Learn by Eliot Washor and Charles Mojkowski gives an endgame view for principals and administrators to see how the Big Picture can be applied.

Building More Responsive Schools, Dr. Fischler's book of commentaries. places the computer and other technology in the context of the discussions and projects that come with implementing a portfolio system.

Projects Matt Blazek's collection of projects for digital portfolios helps teachers and students see how a portfolio might be used in a class.

The videos by Dennis Yuzenas show how to arrange a classroom around projects and at least one computer per two students.

the missing ingredient: a small book with photos and large quotes that will reach students, -- and then the students can reach out to parents, principals, teachers, taxpayers and potential mentors.

a) **STUDENTS:** give students examples of what a two-teacher classroom looks like and what behavior is expected in the room.

b) **PARENTS:** help parents get over their memories of school and their internal standard of what "good school work" looks like and what "a classroom show look

like." These images can prevent a parent from seeing herself as a member of the volunteer faculty that a two-teacher classroom needs.

c) PRINCIPALS: how can a principal train teachers to consider getting the multiple certifications? This simple book starts the conversation. When teachers can be shown the joy of teaching 50 kids instead of 120 kids, then it becomes clear that more time can be given to those students. The principal needs a second book (the large format TWO-Teacher Class workbook with posters") that provides support and training for staff to adapt to the

d) TEACHERS: Even a teacher who has certification in only one area can become part of the two-teacher classroom, since the lesson plans can be performed by the other multi-certified teacher. For example, Steve is certified in math, history (social studies), middle school science 5-9, math, ESOL and English, so a Spanish teacher could teach some of the other subjects under Steve's guidance until the Spanish teacher passes the alternative certification of

e) TAXPAYERS

f) MENTORS business owners, managers of officers, waitresses in restaurant workers, they all have a place in the two-teacher classroom. This book is aimed at showing that they, too, have a role to play in making the two-teacher classroom function better.

Students can start the conversation with questions

One of the key parts of this book are a list of questions and statements and quotations that the student can use to start the conversation

How to persuade a parent to support an innovative approach

"Mother, have you ever wondered what it must be like to be a teacher who has to see five groups of kids every week? Imagine seeing 120 kids and having to memorize their names and the names of their families."

How to get a mentor to adopt the school

“Excuse me, sir, I know that you are a client of my father. He helps you when you need your car fixed. I wonder what is your profession? I think you are a lawyer, do you think you can come to our class. One of my classmates wants to be a lawyer someday and it will really help him if he can write to you or send you some questions. Can you give me your email address?”

Approaching a principal

“Mr. Principal, I heard about the two-teacher classroom. Do you think you can put me in this kind of classroom? Is it possible? I really like these features of the classroom. I want to be able to study with the same teacher at least three subjects so I can see the math in physics and history... and then when we study literature the same teacher can show us art and perhaps Spanish.”

“Teacher, have you considered asking the principal of the school to let you teach two subjects or perhaps three subjects together? I see that your ipad has a picture of Italy. You could teach geography as well as your primary subject, English literature. I am sure that you also could show us how art connects with literature, so that could be three subjects together (Geography, English Literature and Art). I heard that it is possible for teachers to get two or three certifications using the FTCE process. It would really be nice if you could be my teacher next year and follow me and also if you could teach at least one more subject so we can blend the classes together.”

Students, if you practice these short speeches, you will capture the attention of adults.

first many adults assume that you are still a child and that you don't have much ability to think about the future.

second they remember when they were children and how they were expected to be passive and accept the ideas of the their teachers. "The teacher knows the best way for your to learn" was the sentence that many adults heard 40 years ago. So it might surprise them if you ask for their help to shape your learning experience.

third, you could even use parts of this book and make your own book or powerpoint. if you want to use a powerpoint, you can download it at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.ppt and then you can make your own version.

or

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"I love math but I don't understand physics."

If a teacher can teach something abstract and another teacher teaches something physical and concrete, the connection can be lost.

If the same teacher can show something physical and connect it to the abstract idea of math, then the student can see the connection.

If a teacher teaches English Literature and the grammar of writing, then the abstract and the concrete can be connected. "I enjoy writing but literature is boring."

If I'm the writing teacher for this student, I know what appeals to him. I can find literature that he will enjoy -- and suddenly literature class is interesting.

If you can write and use math, you have the tools to go farther.

You only have to see the connection. If you have one teacher who teaches you both science and math

if the same teacher teaches you literature and writing, then you connect the abstract to the concrete.

It is easy to understand math as connection to natural sciences.

A message to the teacher

Of course you are an expert in one area of the corpus of knowledge. But you also know some connections between your special area and every other special area. What is the link between spanish and math? Between history and math? Between chemistry and history? between Literature and art? Between physics and literature? Every teacher went through high school. WE've been where the student is, we have suffered through the illusion that math is separate from the other subjects. We can learn different points of view from different teachers. The skill of the two-teacher classroom is to bring in separate views while keeping the connections.

If teacher A and Teacher B share the subjects, they can bring in the lesson plans of Teacher C, D and E. They can ask these other teachers to visit the class and give a ten minute lecture or lesson, which the students can video record. Then the job of the students is to present the information to Teachers A and B and show how the viewpoints of Teachers C, D and E connect with the subjects that A and B are teaching.

The two-teacher classroom does not limit points of view. The two-teacher classroom brings in other teachers with lectures. The purpose of having only two teachers is to make sure the connections are kept.

we want students to understand the integration of the information.

Up to grade 6, there is usually one teacher who in elementary schools around the world shows the connections. That one teacher knows each student very well, their moods at different times of the day, their potential best time to soar and shine, when they need time to rest and what subjects inspire them.

The teacher creates the integration of learning.

“I hated algebra when I was your age.”

-- *An 8th grade teacher of English, who said this sentence in front of six students.*

As a math teacher, when I heard this statement, I was annoyed. But then I decided to use this to my advantage. I asked the teacher to sit with the students and just listen to them describe the problem. Maybe my students could teach the English teacher to enjoy algebra.

Why? Algebra might be best explained by an English teacher. Algebra is really a study of relationships.

this is the challenge of integration. Math and grammar follow rules. So why can't a teacher of English rise above her fear of math and show the parallel systems of rules in grammar and math?

We think that the best teacher is the most accomplished. We look for the best person to learn from and we often try to find the most accomplished person. We need to find the person who can connect the subject to what we know. we need to find teachers who can connect the information to other information.

“There is so much more to learn today than in the 1940s.”

this is the danger of focusing on content. We need to focus on skills. I greatly admire my uncles, people who were trained in the 1940s and 1950s. the content was less, many of them studied only pre-algebra, algebra and geometry, then didn't learn trigonometry, calculus or statistics. They are very practical and they can describe the world around them very well without calculators. “What if this field were $\frac{1}{8}$ th bigger? How much more would we need to plant?”

Today we try to teach too much. We present material that will not be learned permanently.

fifty years ago, the teachers trained and retrained the students.

Today we present trigonometry and equations with three variables. What is the practical use?

Of course, let the material be available if the student wants to pursue it or shows interest or ability, but let's not make everyone take so much content. If you have decided to become an engineer, you can prepare for those classes or you can take the classes when you get to university. in the meantime you will have ethics, extra languages and a strong ability to communicate and collaborate. These skills are more important than derivative and integration of a formula.

If you want to become an editor of a magazine, why do you need to know about calculus? it is better that you study the history of printing.

*-- This section of this book comes from a discussion between Mario and Steve
25 June, 2013.*

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