

Partnership Learning

The six principles outlined below were developed by Jim Knight and described in his Partnership Learning Fieldbook. They serve as the framework for the AAC Implementation Coaching you have requested. Our hope is to use these principles to foster a positive environment that promotes learning.

****Another Partnership Principle, “Reciprocity,” is described in other versions of this document.****

Equality

“If teachers are truly equal with the change agent in a workshop, their ideas need to count. Equality does not mean that each participant has the same knowledge as the facilitator, but it does mean that each participant’s opinion is important and that every point of view is worth hearing,” page 9.

Choice

“Partners choose to work together; that is a defining characteristic of a partnership. People who are in a partnership enter more or less as equals. Partners are people who both have a say, who both guide the direction of whatever endeavor they share, who both have the right to say yes and no, and make choices, as long as they are partners,” page 10.

“Offering choices during professional development does not mean that everything is up for grabs. Teachers have to strive for standards, and if they are to be treated professionally, they need to act professionally,” page 11.

Voice

“If partners are equal, if they choose what they do and don’t do, it stands to reason that they should be free to say what they think, and that their opinions count. For that reason, Partnership Learning recognizes that professional development has to value the opinions of all participants, not just the ideas of the presenter,” page 12.

“In addition to everything else, partnership is enhanced when people listen to each other with care. Providing an opportunity for people to speak is only one half of the challenge. Facilitators have to listen authentically, empathetically,” page 12.

Reflection

“Offering workshop participants the freedom to consider ideas before adopting them is central to the principle of reflection within Partnership Learning,” page 14.

“Reflection enables people to become more aware of their tacit knowledge, to understand the assumptions that are implicit in their actions, and to get the feel for what they are learning,” page 14.

Dialogue

“During dialogue, people inquire into each others’ positions at least as much as they advocate their own point of view, and they use specific strategies to surface their own and others’ assumptions,” page 16.

“Dialogue is not the same as simple discussion, where individuals advocate their points of view in competitive discussion with little, if any, reflection on the assumptions that underlie their points of view,” page 16.

Praxis

“Simply put, praxis describes the act of applying new ideas to our own lives,” page 18.

“Praxis is not memorizing a new routine so we can teach it in our classes exactly as we memorized it. Praxis is not using cooperative learning activities to ensure that teachers fully understand how to score an assessment tool. Praxis is not running a workshop so that the picture in our mind ends up exactly the same in the minds of all of the participants. Rather, praxis is enabled when teachers have a real chance to explore, prod, stretch, and recreate whatever they are studying—to roll up their sleeves, consider how they teach, learn a new approach, and then reconsider their teaching practices and reshape the new approach, if necessary, until it can work in their classroom,” pages 18-19.