

APPROACHES
to
TEAM TEACHING

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Team teaching is a response of education to an era that is continually emphasizing the need for meaningful communication, cooperative planning, innovation, and an exchange of ideas. In an attempt to learn what is meant by the phrase, "team teaching," and to discover what impact team teaching has made on pupils and teachers, answers were sought for the following questions: (1) What is a good working definition of team teaching? (2) How are teams organized? (3) How do they function? (4) What do those involved in team teaching think of it? (5) What does research say about team teaching? (6) How do noteworthy educators react to it?

Interviews with administrators and teachers who have been involved in the organization and operation of team teaching schools provided a considerable amount of first-hand information. Observations of team teaching provided material for determining how theories might be weighed against actual performances. Although the literature about team teaching is scanty when compared to the formidable bulk of books and periodicals dealing with other facets of education, there nevertheless exists research reports, articles and books which further the development of the knowledge of team teaching.

Despite limited research on team teaching, certain conclusions could be reached. Team teaching has emphasized

the wisdom of providing more planning time for teachers. It has underlined the wisdom of treating teachers as professionals by providing time and space in which they can singly and collectively organize the methods and materials of teaching.

Team teaching has effectively demonstrated the wisdom of supplying professional teachers with adequate para-professional support. This step has given the teachers the freedom and time so necessary for determining goals and planning lessons.

Team teaching has given the teachers a greater voice in determining school policy because administrators and boards of education are more influenced by the recommendations of a group of teachers who have had the time to make careful judgments.

At least a partial solution to the merit pay question is found in team teaching. The hierarchial organization of the team is an excellent structure for increasing the salaries of some teachers by giving them positions of increased responsibility. Perhaps the most valuable contribution team teaching has made to education is that educators are being forced to take a long, hard look at the isolated, self-contained classroom and to consider possible alternatives.

At least a decade of true research is needed before the values of team teaching can be properly assessed. In the meantime it is safe to assume that a method of

organization that encourages teachers to plan together and to share ideas and responsibilities will play a part in increasing the efficiency of the teaching-learning process.