

# 10 Keys for Scheduling

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1. **Gather the key players.** Begin by gathering the key players. While many people may want to participate, try to keep your numbers low at first. Too many opinions can slow the process and/or delay productivity.

It is recommended to have the following key players as a part of the scheduling planning:

- An Administrator—to be able to make decisions as they come up such as can we add another co-teaching or resource class? ;
  - Special Education and General Education teacher(s) who know the students, their support levels and behavior patterns, etc...;
  - Special education counselor as they have the knowledge of the number of classes being offered, and they know if they can move class periods around, etc...;
  - Diagnostician/ARD Facilitator has the know all to be able to look at an IEP schedule of services pages to ensure services and support is being interpreted/followed correctly.
  - OTHER: Depending on the make up of your campus, you may want to include additional staff who have insight into the scheduling needs of teachers, students, and related service providers.
2. **Identify the number of special service providers** (teachers and paraprofessionals) on staff.
  3. **Identify the number of students with special needs in your school.** This can include just special education if you want to start more simply, or you may choose to also consider students who are gifted, English Language Learners, those on 504 plans, and so forth.
  4. **Review each of the students:** Weight students according to need. Teams can use colored post-it notes with each color indicating a different level of need; for example: high, medium, and low. Teams can also use the Worksheet for Scheduling Collaboration and Co-Teaching and check the appropriate boxes. See the Worksheet for Scheduling Co-Teaching: Codes to see the key to each number.
  5. **Count the number of areas in each grade** that need to be special education (high to low), general education with support, and co-taught. This is merely a frequency count.
  6. When grouping students for special education or general education classes, **consider the student's weighting.** Try to keep each class at a similar weight by dividing up students so no one class has too many students with significant behavioral or academic difficulties.
  7. **Monitor the percentages of students with special needs** in each class. In order to ensure the direct support of special educators and paraprofessionals, students with IEPs need to be clustered somewhat, but if done too much, it becomes a special education class.
  8. **Limit general educator and special educator pairings.** Again, too many is simply too many. Reducing the number of individuals teachers have to work with increases the chances that effective collaboration will occur between teachers.
  9. **Invite a few other stakeholders** in to view the schedule and give feedback to see if you missed anything. This is a paradigm shift; things *will* need to change.
  10. **Work for this schedule for a year.** See what works and what doesn't. Be open to suggestions for improvement. Make sure everyone in the school knows that you are working toward improvement in inclusive and co-taught education.

**CANNOT be based on administrative convenience.**

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*Adapted from: Wendy Murawski, Collaborative Teaching in Elementary Schools*

