



**Teacher Preparation Initiative  
Saint Cloud State University  
Partner District Superintendents**

*Inspiring Achievement*

**COPY**

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Dean Alawiye:

As you are aware, the Teacher Preparation Initiative at St. Cloud State University has developed a unique and special partnership with six of Minnesota's P-12 public schools in effort to reshape the way that new teachers are trained and supported. Since 2009, SCSU staff and superintendents from area schools have met to discuss both "big picture" issues of teacher preparation as well as specific details of what might be done. The partner superintendents have been active in many levels of these discussions.

Over the past year, one of the critical issues at the center of our discussions has been the implementation of the co-teaching model as the base for student teaching and teacher preparation efforts. Through our discussions, it has become very clear that the co-teaching approach makes the most sense as the approach for the university and the local school district. As partner superintendents, our base of understanding of the power of the co-teaching model has drawn us to the conclusion that the St. Cloud State University model of teacher preparation *must* be the foundation of the program.

The rationale for this expectation is based on a number of factors. Our understanding and experience is that the co-teaching model provides prospective teachers with an outstanding preparatory experience. It is a model which enhances student performance and supports student academic improvement by providing more instructional direction, more adults to observe and influence learning, and greater opportunities to impact learning. It is a model allowing cooperating teachers, who are now subject to much greater accountability, to retain responsibility for their classrooms while offering additional support and resources to accomplish their work. These elements are critical factors facing districts, schools, teachers, and students in an era of greater scrutiny and accountability.

Beyond the positive impact on the learning environment, the partner superintendents strongly believe the university needs to fully implement a system for which it is regionally and nationally recognized. The co-teaching work and student teaching model at SCSU has received NCATE, Renaissance Group, AACTE, AASCU, and MnSCU honors over the last five years but has not become the standard operating mode of the teacher education program. We, as partner superintendents, find it very odd and unusual that a critically acclaimed approach would not be the core of the program at SCSU. As such, we would expect co-teaching to become the standard and base expectation for our partnership efforts as well as the general approach to student teaching for the university.

As partners in the Teacher Preparation Initiative, we are taking this time to express to you, and to St. Cloud State University, our clear and strong support for the implementation of co-teaching as the foundation of the teacher preparation program of SCSU. As we have noted, we not only support this approach but fully expect it to be one of the cornerstones of our partnership. Thank you for your efforts to ensure the implementation of co-teaching within the partnership and teacher preparation program.

Eric Williams, Holdingford

Jim Johnson, Monticello

Scott Staska, ROCORI

Bruce Watkns, St. Cloud

Joe Hill, Sartell-St. Stephen

Dan Bittman, Sauk Rapids-Rice