

CASE STUDY

JACKIE'S* STORY:

Ensuring Accessible Instructional Practices in a Charter Network

When a large charter network partnered with ABC, they discovered gaps between their written commitment to inclusion and classroom reality. **“ABC’s THRIVE framework aligns very well with the network’s mission, values, and practices,” explained Jackie, a network leader.** Their data revealed two critical challenges:

Success Indicators

#10 “Knowledge of Evidence-Based Instructional and Assessment Practices for Diverse Learners”



ineffective co-planning processes during Collaborative Planning Meetings




co-teaching that rarely moved beyond basic “one teach/one assist” approaches


Jackie knew they needed to bridge the gap between their aspirational goals and daily instructional practice.

Setting Priorities and Aligning on the Vision

Working with ABC on a Coaching for Equity engagement, Jackie and her team grounded their transformation work in both vision and practice. “Element 2 of the THRIVE framework pairs nicely with our instructional rubrics which drive high-quality instruction in all classrooms,” Jackie explained. This alignment between frameworks provided a foundation for meaningful change.

ABC and network leaders identified two strategic priorities that could be addressed in tandem:

 strengthening co-planning processes

 improving co-teaching through supporting school-based coaching

Strengthening Co-Planning Processes

Effective co-planning is essential for inclusive instruction, yet the network's existing Collaborative Planning Meetings weren't yielding desired results. To address this, they worked in partnership with ABC to undertake a systematic review and redesign of their planning practices. This included:

- Analyzing existing tools and rubrics through an inclusion lens
- Maintaining consistent focus on demystifying special education and clarifying strong inclusive teaching practices
- Engaging in targeted training for specialists and other staff to build capacity around formal and informal collaboration

Advancing Co-Teaching Practices through Coaching

Research demonstrates that students benefit most when co-teachers work as equal partners in the delivery of classroom instruction. But most classrooms relied on basic "one teach/one assist" approaches that frequently marginalized special education teachers (mostly in the "assistant role"), limiting the impact of the network's model. To address this, the network worked with ABC to improve building special education leaders capacity to provide supportive coaching to special education teachers in co-teaching pairs. This included:

- **Breaking down silos between special education and general education leadership**

Success Indicators

#16 "Use of Collaborative Approaches to Instruction" and Success Indicator #17: "Effective Planning and Co-Planning"

#17 "Effective Planning and Co-Planning"

- **Conducting classroom observations to see how written plans translated to practice**
- **Establishing quarterly co-observation cycles, with Special Education Coordinators and ABC coaches conducting classroom visits together**
- Maintaining consistent focus on ensuring all students access grade-level content

Success Indicators

#14 "Use of Data to Make Instructional Decisions"

Success Indicators

#15 "Use of Intentional Differentiation and Specialized Instruction for Diverse Learners"

Success Indicators

#11 "Strengths-Based Understanding of Student Potential"

Impact and Outcomes

The transformation led to significant improvements and **"helped to cement the message that all kids deserve access to grade-level content, regardless of entry point,"**

Jackie explains. For example, one campus reduced the gaps in second and third grade achievement scores between students with disabilities and their general education peers to just under 10 percentage points. In third grade specifically, students with disabilities outperformed their general education peers by 4 percent.

Survey data collected by ABC showed strong satisfaction with the partnership, with partner Net Promoter Scores of 83-100, well above the industry benchmark of 47.

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"It is one thing for us to know what we believe and write it down on paper. It is a whole other thing to make it come to life in a classroom," reflects Jackie. "Co-observation with a neutral, external partner who we trust is essential. I think of ABC like a 'critical friend' who shares our goals and can offer positive + constructive feedback from a farther-away perspective."

** The names of the partners in these case studies have been changed to protect their privacy and create a safe space for honest dialogue. This anonymity allowed them to openly share both their struggles and successes, including sensitive details about organizational challenges and the sometimes difficult process of finding effective solutions. By maintaining confidentiality, we were able to capture authentic stories that offer valuable insights for others facing similar situations.*