HANOVER RESEARCH

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: SPECIAL EDUCATION CO-TEACHING IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Prepared for Nebraska Department of Education

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# PROJECT OBJECTIVE

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) seeks provide 'real-life' examples of successful co-teaching practices to create buy-in among Nebraska educators for research-informed co-teaching best practices. Accordingly, NDE has partnered with Hanover Research (Hanover) to engage in in-depth interviews with staff involved in special education (SPED) at educational service units (ESUs) and school districts. This work will feed into a culminating "myth-busting" infographic intended to provide information regarding and buy-in for research-informed co-teaching best practices.

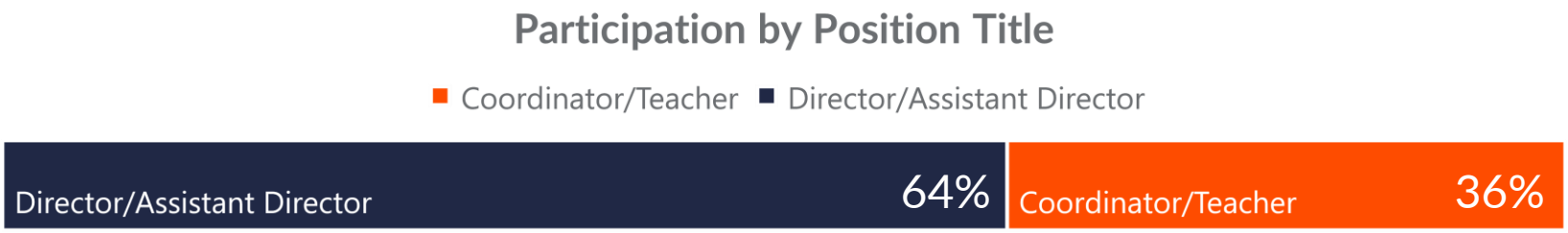
- ✓ Explore the policies and practices at service units and school districts for co-teaching special education students

- ✓ Determine strengths and areas of improvement around co-teaching implementation including for creating buy-in

- ✓ Understand staff members' familiarity with NDE's work in SPED and solicit recommendations

# METHODOLOGY AND STATISTICS

Hanover Research conducted **thirteen (13) interviews with 14 staff members** who are involved in co-teaching practices for SPED at districts or ESUs in Nebraska. One of the interviews took place as a dyad interview, which included participation from two staff members at the same district. To protect confidentiality, specific attributions will not be included with quotations in this executive summary.




**See appendix for participant list.*

**Note:** Qualitative research is exploratory and designed to add insight and a depth of understanding to a particular question or topic. Qualitative findings provide commonalities and trends but are not intended to be statistically significant or to provide generalizable conclusions.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Support all levels of district staff with training focused on implementation action steps, rather than theoretical aspects of co-teaching, and facilitate knowledge sharing between school districts.** Participants advocate for more hands-on educator training and support with implementation challenges like scheduling, planning, and resource management (e.g., staffing, funding). Providing examples of implementation solutions, especially those specific to school levels (i.e., elementary), would support districts to build capacity for co-teaching

2. **Build connections between general education and special education initiatives**. Participants advocate for general educators and administrators to be involved in SPED initiatives and trainings at both the state and district levels. They feel these initiatives require schools to train staff outside of SPED to support inclusion. Specifically, participants note that the siloed nature of the state SPED department hinders progress. They believe general education staff should receive SPED training in their postsecondary education program and through professional development provided from NDE.

3. **Offer guidance to SPED Directors regarding evaluation strategies for co-teaching practices**. Districts lack specific methods to evaluate the impact of co-teaching and need support in identifying criteria for classroom walkthroughs or linking student outcome data to classroom practices.

# KEY FINDINGS (1/3)

**Although there is a consensus on the factors that are important for co-teaching, many schools struggle with a consistent approach to implementation**. Participants identify co-planning, a collaborative mindset, and effective communication as critical to successful co-teaching. Although some schools have established procedures, many districts do not have a standardized approach to co-teaching. SPED directors typically encourage parallel or team-teaching models, but often these are not implemented due to a lack of resources or training, and many co-teachers default to the one teach one assist model. Additionally, the implementation of co-teaching practices varies widely across different school levels and subject areas, influenced by scheduling constraints, resource availability, and content specificity.

**Participants explain that data helps support educator buy-in and evaluation for co-teaching.** Teachers are generally open to co-teaching if they are provided with adequate resources and understand the associated benefits. However, some teachers resist co-teaching due to a desire for classroom autonomy. Data reflecting the positive outcomes for students can improve buy-in. Most schools lack specific evaluation strategies for co-teaching and rely only on student performance data. There is recognition of the need for more structured evaluation methods, such as specific co-teaching observations and more effective use of data.

# KEY FINDINGS (2/3)

**Although schools are at different stages in implementing co-teaching, they identify similar areas of strength and difficulty.** SPED directors and staff identify inclusion, flexibility, and teacher attitudes as strengths of their co-teaching approach. They feel staff are knowledgeable and competent at adapting to meet students' diverse needs. Time allocation and a lack of adequate resources are the most significant barriers identified by staff. Many educators express the need for more time to plan and collaborate effectively with their co-teaching partners. They also emphasize the need for more personnel, targeted professional development, and support from administrators to effectively implement co-teaching.

**There is a perceived disconnect between NDE's initiatives in SPED and the actual needs of educators**. While some interview participants are familiar with NDE's initiatives, others lack detailed knowledge or understanding. Many participants are aware of NDE's Journey to Inclusion and Coherence Project, but some lack detailed knowledge about how to get involved. The project is seen as supportive but could improve in providing targeted support to districts. Overall, participants suggest NDE provide more focused training and resources on implementation rather than theory.

# KEY FINDINGS (3/3)

**Interview participants share several suggestions for NDE related to co-teaching and SPED initiatives, emphasizing communication and building capacity.** They suggest NDE facilitate more two-way communication to ensure they are providing resources and professional development that meets the needs of schools. Specifically, they advocate for more opportunities for feedback and direct conversations with state representatives. Additionally, SPED staff advocate for more involvement of general education in SPED initiatives, including training and decision-making. They feel that NDE should minimize the siloed structure of departments at the state level and promote training general educators and administrators in SPED. Further, staff advocate for more flexibility in using funding and completing state level mandates.

# SECTION I: CO-TEACHING EXPERIENCES

“We rebranded co-teaching and tried to re-present it with our new curriculum. We are really trying to get away from the one teach, one assist, and use parallel or station teaching so that it holds both adults accountable and involves them in instruction. When it is one teach, one assist, one person ends up being a floater or a glorified paraprofessional. Both individuals are teachers, and we're paying them as teachers, so they need to be teaching.”

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# DEFINING CO-TEACHING

Interviewees share a general consensus that co-teaching involves two teachers—often one general education and one special education teacher—**collaboratively planning and delivering instruction to meet the diverse needs of students**. Participants cite the importance of collaboration, planning, and understanding in a co-teaching partnership as well as the sharing of expertise. They also highlight the need for **co-teaching to be a conscious choice** rather than a convenience, with the ultimate goal of meeting the needs of all students. In some cases, interview participants feel that co-teaching is encouraged without considering why and how it will add to students' learning experiences.

> *"I think co-teaching from a special education perspective definitely includes **two teachers that are actively planning the lessons together** and delivering the instruction. The two teachers have defined roles, and both own the classroom. It's a true partnership."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

> *"To me, **co-teaching is always about—at the heart of it—students**. All kids have areas of strength and need, regardless of whether they have a disability or not. Co-teaching is the professional collaboration between two educators who have expertise in different areas and plan and teach students in the general education classrooms."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

# FACTORS FOR CO-TEACHING SUCCESS

**Interview participants identify several factors that make co-teaching successful including co-planning, mindset, and intentional communication**. Participants especially highlight the importance of co-planning time and how it can foster strong partnerships between co-teachers. They also emphasize how co-teachers must believe in the approach they are taking and adopt a positive mindset toward co-teaching in order for it to be successfully implemented. Further, some staff involved in co-teaching share the importance of training or professional learning, scheduling for collaboration and aligning students' schedules, and identifying shared objectives and goals.

> *"The **opportunity to collaborate**. I think having the time carved out to be able to meet and really plan through what's going to happen on the day-to-day through lessons is crucial to making it successful."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"**Co-planning is the key**. If you have two teachers who can work together, you're going to get a more positive impact on student growth and learning. If you just put co-teaching into place and there isn't that relationship between the teachers, or the intentional planning around the different co-teaching models to meet kids' needs, the positive effect of co-teaching isn't there."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

# CO-TEACHING PROCESSES

**While some service units and school districts have clear procedures for co-teaching, many participants feel they lack a standardized approach**. School districts do not have specific policies for co-teaching, but some implement systems that align training or schedules to support co-teachers. Co-teaching processes significantly differ across school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high school) with variances in implementation fidelity due to different planning and scheduling challenges. Some districts do not have the internal capacity to create standardized systems for co-teaching, and some districts focus more on inclusion practices rather than specifically co-teaching.

*"We're probably **less focused on the preciseness of co-teaching model and more on being inclusive** and collaborating on the design of the instruction because we don't have a lot of time for the common plan time. We don't have the personnel, resources, or time to implement co-teaching effectively now. Co-teaching is **working best at the middle school because we have interdisciplinary teams** with common plan time. Outside of that building, we're trying to put stuff together as best we can."*

– Director/Assistant Director

# CO-TEACHING PRACTICES

**Department directors typically promote parallel or team teaching, but a lack of resources or training often results in many co-teachers using the one teach, one assist model**. Districts struggle to foster an environment—due to scheduling, personality conflicts, or resource constraints—that ensures both co-teachers share equal responsibility in the classroom. Staff also explain that they are trying to move away from push-in and pull-out approaches which typically occur at certain school levels (i.e., elementary, middle, high school) that are not conducive to scheduling for co-teaching. Co-teaching is most often implemented in math and ELA classrooms, but grade level and subject area impact the specifics of implementation.

> *"Whenever I'm asked to come into a room, there's usually an issue going on with a student and **they need behavior support.** I don't know if I really do much co-teaching."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

> *"**Parallel teaching and team teaching** are probably the two most encouraged ones. Some teachers have a really hard time giving up control of their classroom. So sometimes it works well and sometimes it doesn't, but our goal is to not make our certified teaching staff an additional paraprofessional. We want them to be utilizing their skill set. "*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# EDUCATOR BUY-IN (1/2)

**Interview findings suggest that most teachers are willing to implement co-teaching when they have adequate resources and an understanding of co-teaching and its associated benefits.** Staff indicate that buy-in requires teachers to feel prepared through co-teaching training and structures that allow for ongoing collaboration and planning. Some participants express frustrations with teachers not wanting to co-teach as they prefer to have autonomy over the classroom. They relate co-teaching partnerships to "marriage" because of the shared responsibility. However, staff suggest that reducing the extra workload on co-teachers through efficient structures and resources can sometimes improve buy-in. Additionally, sharing data that shows co-teaching produces gains for students can be a powerful tool for promoting buy-in.

> *"I feel like **our teachers want to co-teach**, and they want students to be included as much as possible. I'm **not sure that the co-planning time is available** to them, or the structures for how to use that time."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# EDUCATOR BUY-IN (2/2)

*"I think everybody is **on board when they're given the time and they have the right partner**. Many people say, 'Oh, co-teaching's like a marriage.' It's kind of true. You have to be able to communicate. People are on board when they are given the resources but if it feels like an extra thing to do and it doesn't feel beneficial to them or the kids that's where we've had issues. We've fallen short in those attempts because they've not been able to collaborate and plan and be intentional about it."*

– Director/Assistant Director

*"I don't think anyone is ever really jazzed about it, but I think the **buy-in requires laying the foundation**. Also, trying to find solid practices that are effective and, unfortunately, don't take a lot of time. Teachers are taxed more so now than they were five years ago, and we don't want to burn anyone out. We need to make sure they understand it's a collaborative effort. Then, we need to lay the foundation of what it looks like by training our staff and **providing them the support they need** through a coaching model."*

– Director/Assistant Director

# CO-TEACHING EVALUATION (1/2)

**Many schools do not have specific evaluation tools or metrics dedicated to assessing the effectiveness of co-teaching**. Evaluations that do occur are often part of broader classroom assessments or teacher evaluations without distinct criteria for co-teaching practices. While formal evaluation tools may be lacking, some educators note that principals and evaluators recognize and comment on the effectiveness of co-teaching through observations, walkthroughs, and meetings. Schools rely on general student performance data, such as grades, standardized test scores, and progress on IEP goals, to indirectly assess the impact of co-teaching.

This approach suggests that improvements in student outcomes are indicative of successful co-teaching, even if the co-teaching practice itself is not directly evaluated. However, there is also a recognition of the potential for developing more structured evaluation methods, such as incorporating specific co-teaching observations into walkthroughs and utilizing data more effectively to assess the impact on student learning.

# CO-TEACHING EVALUATION (2/2)

*"There **hasn't been a specific initiative to evaluate co-teaching but that happens naturally** as teachers are being appraised with walkthroughs and informal observations. Teachers are getting feedback on those if they're using those models."*

– Director/Assistant Director

*"We tracked data over the years as a district, particularly at the high school level, to see if push-in support has been effective for our kiddos with IEPs. Data does support that there is **an increase in test scores and an increase in graduation rates** for our kids that do get that support. However, I do think we need to boost it and maybe switch over to a co-teaching model."*

– Coordinator/teacher

*"**We look at student outcomes data** in the form of their Nebraska State test scores. We give MAP assessments and use FastBridge for progress monitoring. That is the student outcome piece that we use for quantitative data. We also do **surveys for implementation fidelity** to make sure that we're getting feedback from staff on the strengths, areas of need, and barriers. Then, we think through how can we overcome some of those barriers to make sure that students can stay in their general education classrooms as much as possible."*

– Director/Assistant Director

*"We look at **progress report data from IEP goals** and **report card grades**. We also look at data from school improvement plan (SIPP), and some of the grants, like TIP for NDE."*

– Director/Assistant Director

# STRENGTHS

**Special education directors and staff identify inclusion, flexibility, and teacher attitudes as strengths of their co-teaching approach**. Many staff members recognize the potential benefits of co-teaching for supporting student inclusion and providing targeted assistance to students with diverse needs. Although some districts may not have a standard approach to co-teaching, they feel most teachers are knowledgeable and willing to support students in new ways. They also note that focusing on inclusive practices allows staff the autonomy to make decisions they feel are best for their students, including different service delivery models or instructional strategies.

> *"Our special education teachers are **very knowledgeable on the content**. They know the content like the back of their hand because they're in the classroom with their students learning the materials."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

> *"We give them the framework to make their own decisions about what model to use. We focus on the specific needs of students in the classroom and then make **individualized decisions about service delivery in a real fluid and flexible way.** Some days we push-in and some days we might not, or some days we might co-teach and some days we might not."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# CHALLENGES: PLANNING AND SCHEDULING

**A recurring theme among interviews is the struggle with time allocation**. Many educators express the need for more time to plan and collaborate effectively with their co-teaching partners. This is particularly challenging for some schools where teachers may be spread thin across multiple grade levels and subjects or due to different master schedules. The lack of common planning time is seen as a significant barrier to effective co-teaching, as it hinders the development of a cohesive teaching strategy and the establishment of a strong professional relationship between co-teachers.

> *"**Once teachers can get over the hump of planning, they see the value in it**, but I think that's the largest barrier because teachers say, 'I don't have time to meet with three classroom teachers.' … Teachers who have started co-teaching really love it. We took some videos at buildings that were doing a really good job with it and did interviews as part of our professional learning to show, 'How do you manage this? What have been the benefits?'"*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"The scheduling piece is the hardest—making sure that we have enough staff and being able to spread them out. Then, the **common plan time is difficult**, but I feel like we are creative with flexible service delivery models to address that."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# CHALLENGES: RESOURCES

**Another significant challenge is the lack of resources and support for co-teaching.** Many schools struggle with staffing shortages and high levels of staff turnover. These staffing issues make it difficult to implement and sustain co-teaching since it results in minimal planning time and undertrained staff. The responses also highlight a gap in understanding and awareness of co-teaching best practices. Many educators express a desire for more guidance and support in this area, suggesting a need for more targeted professional development and training opportunities. This is compounded by the fact that many educators feel that they are not given enough guidance or support from their administrators or the wider education system.

> *"I think [teachers] feel like they're doing it, but **don't have the knowledge behind it**. I think that knowledge would empower them and improve partnerships. They could work through, 'Okay. What's my role? What's the expectation? When will we co-plan?'"*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"Teachers have had the training, but with **staff turnover and staffing shortages** it is hard to do co-teaching well. You have to have all the tenets and keep allocating resources to them. I think it fell off our radar, and with significant staff turnover, we had different priorities."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

"For some of the strategies we've used, the data shows that co-teaching does produce gains for students. We had some buildings really take it on and **we closely monitored their data over the last couple of years. We were able to incorporate those successes into our professional learning** last year to say, 'Look how powerful [co-teaching] can be, and how we can close the gaps for students and keep them in Tier I with support.' I think it's also nice having coaches, who can get out there and help, but also be realistic when it might not be right for all students. Sometimes in professional learning, teachers say, 'Yeah, but that doesn't work here.' I thin being open and honest and realistic about that with teachers is very helpful."

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# SECTION II: PERCEPTIONS OF NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

“I go to a lot of the NDE trainings and take staff to them. I think [NDE] is on the right track, but **I often feel they're preaching to the choir**. They have trainings and want to bring in SPED directors. Well, we already know because we are the choir. We're the ones singing out in the districts the same song they're singing to us, and we have been for years. Oftentimes, I feel like it's just **a repeat of stuff we've had for the last year**. I don't feel great about the way MTSS is set up at the state level right now. I don't think we get the support that we used to get, and I don't feel good about the people in those seats in our area in particular. **I never have communication** from them as a SPED Director in one of the biggest districts in the area. In some ways, I've been disappointed in what's being offered and how it's being offered. I feel like they don't always have the right people at the table and sometimes I think it's where and when the training is held which makes it hard to get people there.”

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# NDE INITIATIVES

**Some interview participants are very familiar with NDE's initiatives in SPED, while most others have a general awareness of initiatives but lack detailed knowledge or understanding**. There is a perceived disconnect between the NDE's initiatives and the actual needs of educators in the field. Several interviewees felt that the NDE's training opportunities can be repetitive or too high-level/theoretical. Additionally, NDE's focus on special education in their trainings and initiatives, while important, often neglects to acknowledge the importance of training general education teachers and administrators to assist with SPED initiatives. Overall, these insights suggest a potential opportunity for NDE to increase its outreach and support to meet educators' needs.

> *"I feel like the MTSS stuff they offer now is really **high level, just overview, overview, overview**. I don't even hear from the state people that are in our areas."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"I've heard some of NDE's presentations. Our district took part of a four- or five-day training with SPED strategies and co-teaching was a topic during that. I know there's been work around it and state-level conferences so I'm loosely familiar. **I don't know what their goal is long-term.** I would love to be more engaged with the Journey to Inclusion initiative but is not an opportunity for us right now."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# JOURNEY TO INCLUSION AND COHERENCE PROJECT

**Many participants are familiar with NDE's Journey to Inclusion and Coherence Project, but some lack awareness of the details or steps to get involved.** Some participants report that their district has been involved in the Journey to Inclusion Project, and they share neutral to positive experiences working with the consultant group, SPED Strategies. Overall, the project seems to support districts in getting started with co-teaching but could improve in providing targeted support to districts (e.g., developing structures for co-planning). Additionally, some participants felt they lacked information on whether the project would be useful for their district or how they would go about getting involved.

> *"I feel like **I don't know how to get involved.** I know it's happening. I hear them talk about it at our director meetings that we have once a month, and we get Friday blasts from them."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"I've also been able to talk to districts that have used SPED Strategies for the Journey to Inclusion work, and there have been **mixed reviews**. We are a very inclusive school district. We feel like we have a lot of **internal capacity for this work**, so we have not pursued the Department of Ed resources for these things."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# NDE AND JOURNEY TO INCLUSION PROJECT

**When discussing the Journey to Inclusion Project and other NDE trainings or initiatives, participants share similar concerns**. SPED staff advocate for more specific training and resources on how to implement practices rather than theory-focused content. In addition, they express concerns that the focus is too much on training and supporting special educators without involving other key personnel, including general educators, principals, and administrators. Interview findings highlight the importance of NDE being more involved in classrooms to understand the realities of co-teaching and to facilitate more effective two-way communication.

> *"I'm interested to know why is this their new push? Why is this their new thing? If they're moving forward with this, you need to **provide the research to help districts see the value** and the evidence-based behind it."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"I think that we really got to get focused on the implementation pieces…more **seeing it in action rather than hearing about it**."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

“I think **NDE must start having these conversations about special education initiatives with general education administrators, principals**, and people that often are doing appraisal. I have great principals in our district, but sometimes what they're observing and giving feedback on during appraisal isn't necessarily making us better. They'll go into a classroom, and it's well-managed. Both people are moving around the room, but they do not identify areas for improvement like effectively using their time as co-teachers. We need to share methods to improve co-teaching and tangible things to look at for principals to support evaluation.”

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# SECTION III: GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

"Part of this work is on the updates and revisions that happen with implementation. I think everybody knows the classic tenets of good co-teaching, but how does that actually function within a classroom with teacher teams? Can we check on implementation and assist implementation to move forward through **walkthroughs and administrative involvement rather than a review of the classic tenets**? I'm not sure any district in Nebraska needs that. I think a lot of them **need help with what implementation looks like.**"

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# PLANNING FORWARD

**Districts are at different stages of implementing co-teaching**. Some school districts are seeking out professional development (e.g., Universal Design for Learning, co-teaching models), new curriculum or structures, or evaluation changes. Some districts would like to learn more about how NDE can support while others are deeply involved in the Journey to Inclusion Project. Several districts are working through co-teaching initiatives by piloting practices at one school and sharing out successes across the district.

> "Continue to **recruit special education staff** into this field. At the higher education level, what does their education look like so they are prepared to co-teach."
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> "**Last year's professional development focused on the Journey to Inclusion** and laying the foundational steps. Every staff member in the district was trained. Next year, it's **evolving in Universal Design for Learning and then co-teaching**. We have a building that's going to pilot with SPED Strategies. We are looking at how to share what we learn with other staff? How do we take that next step of universal design and apply it to co-teaching?"
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Interview participants call for more specific professional development and support around co-teaching**. School districts engage in professional learning opportunities with both NDE and ESUs but have mixed perceptions of their impact. Staff members express a desire for training that goes beyond theoretical knowledge to include practical strategies, clear expectations, and examples of successful co-teaching practices. This includes a need for guidance on how to effectively plan and collaborate, as well as how to navigate the roles and responsibilities within a co-teaching partnership. Many respondents express frustration with the current state of professional development, which often involves one-off training sessions without follow-up support or coaching.

> *"I **watch webinars and attend trainings** from NDE but some of it is **very theoretical** rather than making it into action steps?'"*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"I think we're **missing co-teaching coaches** to guide the teachers through the best way of delivering a lesson. There's nobody that has a strong background in co-teaching so we attend professional development seminars. However, we need somebody that can guide us through the whole process, **not just a one and done**."*
>
> – Coordinator/teacher

# NDE GROWTH AREAS (1/2)

**SPED Directors and staff advocate for general education to be more involved in special education initiatives and for more flexible and efficient state processes**. Specifically, staff express concerns around the lack of training, both in schools and in post-secondary institutions, given to general educators and administrators to support special education. They also feel that general education departments should be more involved in special education initiatives as they play a large part in supporting inclusion. Additionally, some interview participants suggest that funding sources and grants can be inflexible for supporting co-teaching or can take administrators time away from these initiatives.

> *"When I look at it from the State Department of Education lens, there's no one from an outside department besides special education that's at the table. They've tried to tie in Career Technical Education but that's a weak reach in my world because it's only secondary. How do you tie in the folks that are driving the state standards, writing state standards and creating curriculum measures? How do you tie those people into the conversations to* ***make sure that inclusionary practices are not just a special education function and focus****."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

# NDE GROWTH AREAS (2/2)

**SPED staff advocate for more opportunities for two-way communication with NDE to understand school districts needs and what supports NDE can provide**. Some participants emphasize the lack of direct communication or involvement from NDE suggesting that state representatives do not go into classrooms to observe and talk through challenges. Although there are some opportunities to provide feedback (e.g., interviews, conference survey) participants feel it should be a more collaborative effort. SPED staff emphasize the importance of having examples to support implementation. One participant suggests NDE connect school districts of similar sizes to understand how others have worked through challenges with co-teaching.

> *"I think it would be great if they could **connect districts who are similar in size** and share resources to talk about how it's happening in those districts."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

> *"I doubt that they've been out in classrooms and seen it. There's got to be some way of getting into places to see things in action and then really building that **two-way conversation**. They need to get out and see more things."*
>
> – Director/Assistant Director

“**I think funding is our biggest challenge**. I can pay for special education staff all day with special education funding, but I can't pay for general education. It is hard to find funding sources to support and train our teachers and find subs to cover the time. There is never enough time in the day to make sure that we have valuable collaborative time while trying to fit in all the other requirements. **NDE has a lot of unfunded mandates that we are required to do.** When our staff and our administrators are doing those pieces, it takes away from what kids need and how to train our teachers to get what our kids need.”

**– Director/Assistant Director**

# APPENDIX: PARTICIPANTS

# PARTICIPANTS (1/2)

| # | Name | School | Title |
|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | Anonymous | Anonymous | Anonymous |
| P2 | Anonymous | Anonymous | Anonymous |
| P3 | Tami Kaup | Norfolk Public Schools | Vocational skills teacher and coordinator |
| P4 | Anonymous | Ralston Public Schools | Anonymous |
| P5 (Dyad IDI) | Terry Houlton<br>----------<br>Ted Esser | Millard Public Schools | Director<br>----------<br>Coordinator of SPED |
| P6 | Shannon Hall-Schmeckpeper | Seward Public Schools | Director of Special Services |
| P7 | Melissa Weber-Arnold | Lincoln Public Schools | Assistant Director of Special Education |

# PARTICIPANTS (2/2)

| # | Name | District/ESU | Title |
|---|---|---|---|
| P8 | Danica Vincent | Scottsbluff Public Schools | Special Education Coordinator |
| P9 | Carrie Lee Novotny-Buss | Millard Public Schools | Coordinator of Elementary Special Education |
| P10 | Anonymous | Anonymous | Director of Special Education |
| P11 | Michele Rayburn | ESU 6 | Director of Student Services |
| P12 | Tammy Voisin | Papillion La Vista Community Schools | Director of Special Services |
| P13 | Bailey Stofer | Kearney Public Schools | Level Two SPED Teacher |

HANOVER RESEARCH

# Thank you.

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