

The fact that I've only been teaching a few years is, I think, in some ways a help. I can say to the more experienced teachers, "Well, how would you handle this problem?" It's almost an internship where we're constantly exchanging ideas. There's a lot of feedback. I've presented the teachers with an idea and had them say, "Look, we've done this for a couple of weeks and I don't think it's working." So we pitch in and try something else.

In the high school and, to a lesser extent, the junior high, students typically see a teacher for only one period, which creates problems in the consultation process. Effective group meetings can be especially useful here:

I did an assessment on a learning disabled student who moved into the district. When we had the case conference all the teachers were together, except one, and it was a very effective meeting. They were cooperative and everybody now has a much better handle on this student.

Attention to detail goes a long way in making the consulting role work. For example, it helps to hold meetings at the teachers' convenience:

I think you have to be a little more careful with the teacher who's "bucking". I know that the little things count. If I wanted to meet with a teacher, I would try to arrange a convenient time for that teacher. I would go so far as to arrange the meeting in the smoking staff room if that's what they wanted and I'd make coffee ahead of time and have everything ready so it was a pleasant meeting.

Teamwork Between Methods and Resource Teachers

I've learned never to lose my temper. I will hold it back. I may spout off afterwards [to another M&R teacher],