Curriculum Accessibility Through Universal Design for Learning
Addressing the learning needs of all students by designing to the edges.
THE CHALLENGE:
All children have unique learning needs, abilities and preferences.

THE NEED:
Provide learning opportunities that are effective for all.
**Big Idea**

People don’t have barriers, environments do. In order for students to learn what is taught, barriers in the classroom need to be identified and proactively mitigated.
Objectives

Participants will become acquainted with the concept of Universal Design for Learning and it addresses the challenges intrinsic with teaching diverse learners.

Participants will identify ways to eliminate barriers to the curriculum can be eliminated through instructional decisions that address learner variability.

Participants will become acquainted with a variety of teaching strategies that support learning for a wide variety of learners.
What does “universal accessibility to the curriculum” mean?

What would it look like and sound like in a classroom?
What barriers to learning exist in many classrooms and how can those barriers be eliminated?
“Consider the needs of the broadest possible range of users from the beginning.”

Ron Mace, architect
Universal Design is a principle that is borrowed from architecture. The basic idea behind Universal Design is that accessibility is “built in” so that as many people as possible can have access.

http://www.udlcenter.org/resource_library/videos/udlcenter/udl
Universal Design for Learning is not...

- a curriculum or technology platform.
- one method of teaching all students. A variety of methods are used to give all students an equal opportunity to succeed
- one size fits all.
- an afterthought. It is not retrofitting.
- an “us” vs. “them” resource. UDL benefits all kids, not just those who struggle. Access opportunities are increased for all students.
- a way to “water down” the curriculum. High achievement expectations are maintained at all times.
Universal Design for Learning is...

- a way of optimizing teaching to effectively instruct a diverse group of learners by reducing barriers in instruction.
- based on insights from science of how people learn.
- flexible in how students access material, engage with it, and show what they know.
- proactive. Lessons are designed from the outset to meet the needs of all students through goals, instruction, materials and assessment. Appropriate accommodations and supports are imbedded.
UDL is not a checklist of things to do. It is a new lens for thinking about everything you do.
Provide multiple means of Engagement

Stimulate motivation and sustained enthusiasm for learning in different ways.

Provide multiple means of Representation

Present information and content in different ways to support understanding.

Provide multiple means of Action & expression

Offer options and supports to all so everyone can create, learn and share.
# Expert Learners

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<th>Purposeful &amp; motivated</th>
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<td>Are eager for new learning and are motivated by the mastery of learning itself</td>
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<td>Are goal-directed in their learning</td>
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<td>Know how to set challenging learning goals for themselves</td>
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<td>Know how to sustain the effort and resilience that reaching those goals will require</td>
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<td>Monitor and regulate emotional reactions that would be impediments or distractions to their successful learning</td>
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<th>Resourceful &amp; knowledgeable</th>
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<td>Bring considerable prior knowledge to new learning</td>
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<td>Activate that prior knowledge to identify, organize, prioritize, and assimilate new information</td>
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<td>Recognize the tools and resources that would help them find, structure, and remember new information</td>
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<td>Know how to transform new information into meaningful and useable knowledge</td>
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<th>Strategic &amp; goal-directed</th>
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<tr>
<td>Formulate plans for learning</td>
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<td>Devise effective strategies and tactics to optimize learning</td>
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<td>Organize resources and tools to facilitate learning</td>
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<td>Monitor their progress</td>
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<td>Recognize their own strengths and weaknesses as learners</td>
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<td>Abandon plans and strategies that are ineffective</td>
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The goal is that students have seamless or near seamless access to all aspects of the curriculum.
Critical Elements of UDL in Instruction

Element 1: Clear goals

Element 2: Intentional planning for learner variability

Element 3: Flexible methods and materials

Element 4: Timely progress monitoring

The original MITS Critical Elements are located at http://mits.cenmi.org/
CLEARING A PATH
FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
CLEAR THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!
The severity of one’s disability does not determine their level of potential. The greatest barriers that persons with disabilities have to overcome are not steps or curbs, it’s expectations.

Karen Clay
Online Resources

http://www.cast.org/our-work/about-udl.html#.W6u14vZFy1w

http://udlguidelines.cast.org/

http://udlseries.udlcenter.org/

http://bookbuilder.cast.org/

http://udlexchange.cast.org/home

http://udlstudio.cast.org/

https://www.youtube.com/user/UDLCenter/videos

https://goalbookapp.com/toolkit/strategies

http://katienovakudl.com/

http://castprofessionallearning.org/free-udl-resources-and-tips/