Universal Design for
Learning Series

UDL Implementation

A Process of Change

Goal of this session
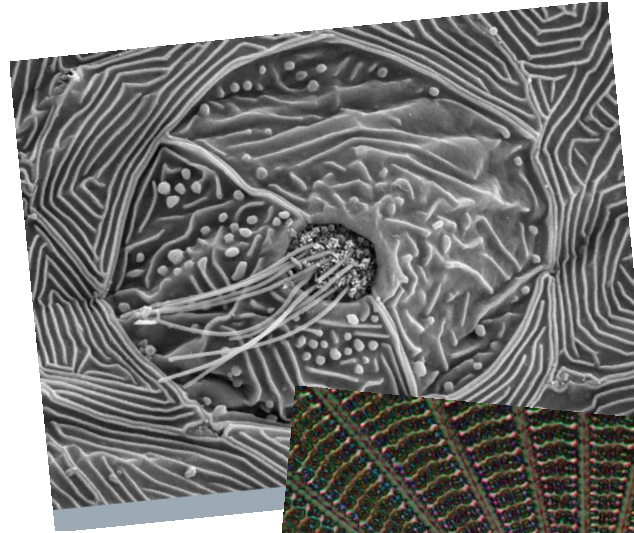
Explore UDL Implementation as a systems change process

Defining UDL Implementation
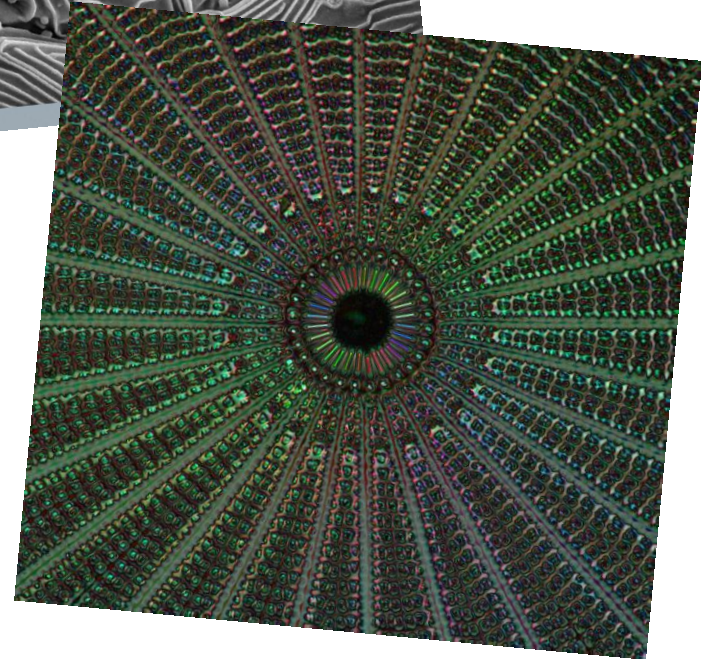
System Variability

Students are:

- Complex systems
- Variable

Schools are:

- Complex systems
- Variable

Defining UDL Implementation

- UDL Implementation is **NOT** a discreet set of rigid steps.

- UDL Implementation **IS**:

  - A process

  - An iterative, continuously improving cycle of learning & growth

  - Designed in a UDL way

  - Customized to meet unique district needs

Each District is Unique

- Each district's approach will be unique.

- We need to:
  - **Anticipate different paths**
  - **Plan for scaffolds and supports**
  - **Meet unique system needs**

- UDL implementation process is different from initiatives that hold districts to specific, lock-step approach.

Getting Started: Identifying a Need

Starting with a clearly **identified need** for change is critical for success UDL implementation at a systemic level.

One district's reasons for considering UDL

- Aligning the curriculum with the Common Core State Standards

- Designing a curriculum that is:

  – Teacher-friendly

  – Student-friendly

- Designing a curriculum that meets the needs of **ALL** learners

UDL Series | *at*   NATIONAL CENTER ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN *for* LEARNING

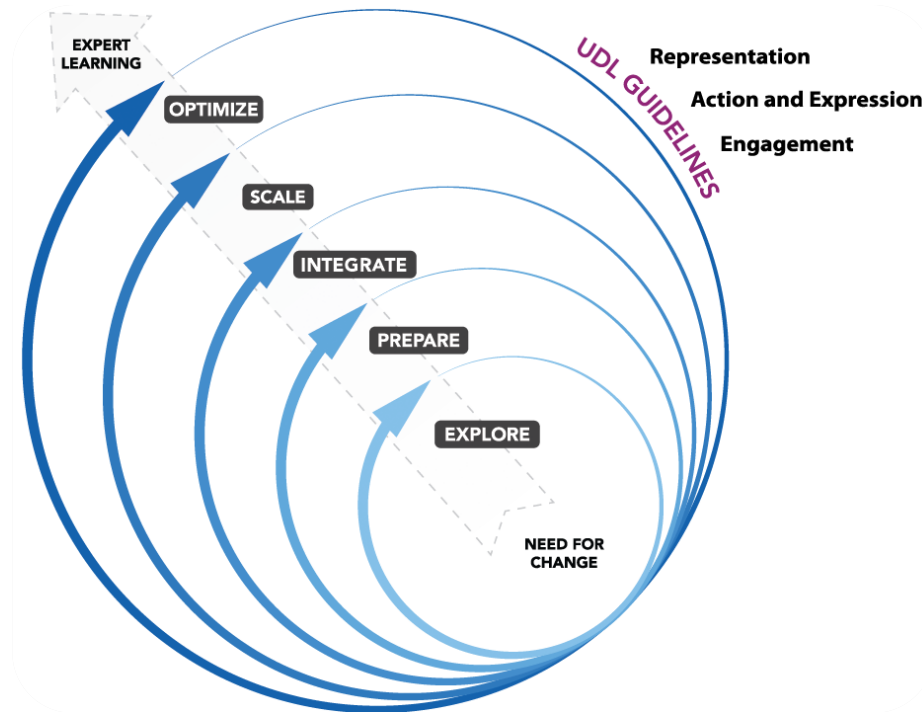# UDL: A "no-brainer" choice

"The UDL framework has all the components we need to move toward the 21st century curriculum."

Roger Plunkett
Baltimore County Public Schools

Graphic of 5 Phases

UDL Implementation Process Graphic

- Iterative, continuously improving series of phases

5 Phases of UDL Implementation

- Adapted from Fixsen, D.L., Naoom, S.F, Blasé, K.A., Friedman, R.M. & Wallace, F. (2005)

- **5 Phases:**
  - Explore
  - Prepare
  - Integrate
  - Scale
  - Optimize

Stop & Think

Stop the video and reflect on what has been discussed so far.

- What is a critical education **need** in your district?

- What would **you** like to see done?

- In what ways will UDL Implementation **address** this need?

Stop the video and discuss these questions.

Explore UDL Implementation

Explore UDL

Focus:

- **Investigating** UDL as a system-wide decision-making framework

- **Building awareness** with key players inside & outside of system

- **Determining willingness & interest** to begin UDL Implementation

Willingness & Interest

Staff willingness & interest is essential

- Push down will create resistance

Request from building principal for UDL workshop

- Concern about **buy-in & ownership**

- Using structured dialogue, staff developed key ideas

- UDL aligned & addresses many concerns

- Utilized UDL Principles, CAST tools, Critical Elements developed in Michigan

Teachers are co-owners

"Teachers are co-owners. We can help them move forward. In that way, we're more likely to have sustainability."

Jeff Diedrich
Michigan Integrated Technology Supports

Prepare for UDL Implementation

Prepare for UDL

Focus:

- **Creating a climate** that is flexible and maintains high expectations for all

- **Mapping resources & processes**

  ➢ Personnel, structures such as planning time, materials, curriculum, professional development

- **Defining strategic vision & plan of action** with expected outcomes

UDL as Conceptual Framework

- District leaders decided:

  - District **initiatives were good but random**

  - In need of conceptual framework to tie things together

  - **UDL was the framework we needed**

- Steps:

  - **Developed a plan** to engage others

  - **UDL added to district conceptual framework** White Paper on learning in 21st Century

  - **Instruction based on UDL framework**

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Vision: Instruction based on UDL

"We went back and added on to that White Paper about instruction in BCSC, how it was based on UDL…That became a part of this…major conception framework, very early on."

Bill Jensen
Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation
Columbus, IN

Integrate UDL Implementation

Integrate UDL

Focus

- **Creating individual & system-wide structures & processes** to support implementation & evaluate its effectiveness

- **Developing educator expertise** in applying UDL to instructional practices & decision-making

- **Fostering collaboration & support** to integrate UDL

Develop Educator Expertise

- **Connect UDL** to what teachers are already doing

  ➤ Embed in teaching & learning framework

- **Provide specific examples**

  ➤ UDL Lesson Builder offers scaffolds

- **Professional learning communities (PLCs)**

  ➤ Emphasize shared goal

- **Provide incentives**

  ➤ Provide common planning time, substitutes, stipends

- **Offer credits**

  ➤ Continuing education or degree

Fostering collaboration

"Thinking outside the box is really important."

Liz Berquist
UDL Facilitator

Scale UDL Implementation

Scale UDL

Focus:

- Promoting **ongoing professional growth**

  ➢ Supporting UDL community of practice responsive to individual & systemic variability

- **Expanding effective practices, processes, & structures**

  ➢ Through professional development & technical assistance

- **Enhancing integrated system-wide approach**

  ➢ Through continual evaluation of gaps & needs

Expanding Effective Structures

Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation (IN)

- Support for ongoing classroom implementation of UDL

- Designed rubric

  - ➤ Used CAST books & online tools

Embedded UDL into teacher evaluation system

- Used for several years by teachers & administrators as communication tool

- Became basis for new teacher evaluation tool

Enhancing classroom practice

"They have now designed an evaluation system where 50% of it is dependent upon on the usage and implementation of UDL in the classroom."

Loui Lord Nelson
Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation
Columbus, IN

Optimize UDL Implementation

Optimize UDL

Focus:

- **Enhancing system-wide culture**

  ➢ Maximize improvement of teaching & learning practices that reflect and align with UDL Principles

- **Predicting, preparing & responding**

  ➢ Anticipate potential internal and external changes that could impact UDL implementation

- **Maximizing improvement**

  ➢ Embed processes that respond to system variability

Embedding UDL in the Culture

Districts need to consider

- **Level of buy-in**
  - ➤ Can't be driven by one individual
  - ➤ Must continue when principal/leader leaves
- **Embed in staff interview process**
  - ➤ Ask questions about alignment with UDL
- **May take 3-7 years to fully implement; not short-term**
- You build **shared ownership & sustainability**

Optimize stakeholder ownership

"So you have to include the entire community of stakeholders…then you're going to be able to sustain (it)."

Jeff Diedrich
Michigan Integrated Technology Supports

Summary

UDL implementation

- Is a process that begins with an identified need for change

- Varies from system to system

- Usually occurs in recursive progression through 5 phases:

  - ➤ Explore

  - ➤ Prepare

  - ➤ Integrate

  - ➤ Scale

  - ➤ Optimize

Questions to Get Started

- What identified need could be addressed by the UDL framework?

- What else do you need to know about UDL?

- What can the district learn from others engaged in UDL implementation?

- What are the benefits & challenges of Implementing UDL as a systemic change process?

Learn More

- Download materials from the **Additional Resources** section

- Explore more resources on the **National Center on UDL** (www.udlcenter.org)

- Learn from others by participating in the discussion forum on **UDL Connect** community entitled ***UDL Implementation: A Process of Change***(www.community.udlcenter.org)