Inclusionary Practices and Systems:

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING
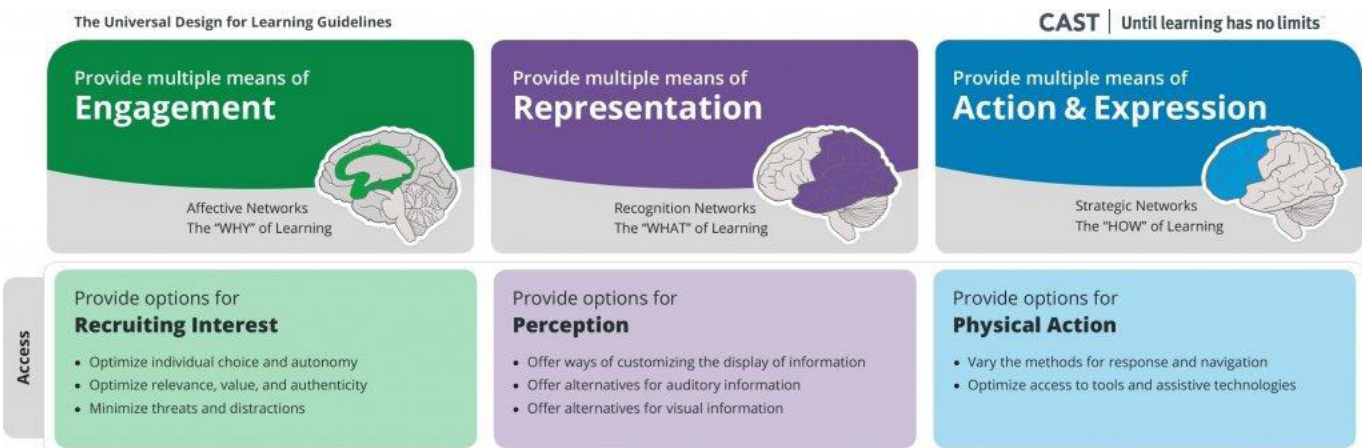
WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING?

Universal Design for Learning educational framework and set of principles that maximizes learning opportunities for all learners. This approach is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that provides equal opportunities for students to succeed. Universal Design for Learning provides students with multiple or flexible ways of viewing or listening to information (representation), expression, and engagement and makes a classroom more inclusive, in addition of reducing the necessity of providing accommodation for students with individualized instruction.

WHY IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING IMPORTANT?

Universal design for learning is important because it provides educators with a variety of strategies and resources to help meet diverse learning needs, improve accessibility to learning opportunities, and increase student success. Universal Design for Learning identifies that each student learns differently and can benefit from having a variety of learning formats to choose from, flexible assessments, and tools to help with organization of new information and skills.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Makes learning more accessible in general education classrooms, which is where most kids with learning and attention issues spend most or all of the school day.
- Presents information in ways that adapt to the learner, instead of asking the learner to adapt to the information.
- Gives kids more than one way to interact with material. UDL builds in flexibility that can make it easier for kids to use their strengths to work on their weaknesses.
- Reduces stigma. By giving a variety of options to all students, UDL doesn't single out the few who receive formal accommodations as part of IEPs or 504 plans.

The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

CAST | Until learning has no limits

Provide multiple means of Engagement
Affective Networks
The "WHY" of Learning

Provide multiple means of Representation
Recognition Networks
The "WHAT" of Learning

Provide multiple means of Action & Expression
Strategic Networks
The "HOW" of Learning

Access

Provide options for **Recruiting Interest**
- Optimize individual choice and autonomy
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Minimize threats and distractions

Provide options for **Perception**
- Offer ways of customizing the display of information
- Offer alternatives for auditory information
- Offer alternatives for visual information

Provide options for **Physical Action**
- Vary the methods for response and navigation
- Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies

CASE STUDY: Universal Design for Learning at Hood Canal Preschool

When Cathy Carlson started at Hood Canal school, she identified many needs in the program. First, she identified the need to provide each student with rigorous, relevant, and engaging learning experiences. Second, was the need to build and sustain meaningful relationships with students, staff, families, the Skokomish Tribe and community. Third, the need to sustain a culture where everyone felt respected and safe. The teachers, therapists, and parents have participated in developing and establishing a culture of inclusion within the district that provides love, support, empathy, and respect. Program practices are researched-based and culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate.

Hood Canal School Pre-K Inclusive program has identified the opportunity and need for Universal Design for Learning to provide students with the educational supports to increase learning achievement for all students. In the first phase of UDL, Hood Canal focused on closing the pre-literacy learning gap between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. The second phase focused on pre-mathematic skills. Hood Canal has been focusing on implementing new strategies and tools, realizing through Universal Design how critical it is to teach to the edges.

An example of utilizing UDL is Hood Canal's use of STEMScopes. STEMScopes focuses on science, technology, engineering and mathematics through all domains of early learning, which includes small large motor skills, social/emotional lessons. STEMScopes changed the early learning experience by teaching a variety of thinking and problem-solving skills. Current data on school readiness and early math and science achievement indicates we are not giving young children the support they need to be "STEM Smart". Utilizing STEM in a universally designed classroom created powerful changes to curriculum and instruction in Hood Canal.

The implementation of UDL has necessitated dramatic changes in assessment. Teaching Strategies GOLD (TSGold) is Hood Canal's main source of assessment. TS Gold affords educators in Hood Canal to observe and collect facts, analyze and respond, evaluate, summarize, plan and communicate. The Hood Canal School Pre-K Inclusive Program is able to reach the potential of each and every student by enhancing our program. Using both instructional strategies and assessment strategies with universal design in mind, has had a huge impact on the inclusive culture in Hood Canal.

RESOURCES

- Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University: www.ncsu.edu/project/design-projects/udi
- Council for Exceptional Children. (2015).
- http://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Ethical Principles-
- Edyburn, D. L. (2013). Inclusive technologies: Tools for helping diverse learners achieve
- National Center on Universal Design for Learning: www.udlcenter.org
- Office Of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 2017 http://www.k12.wa.us
- Planning a Dinner Party https://www.novakeducation.com/udl-vs-di-dinner-party-analogy/
- The Myth of Average https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTpQYDTgq7E
- Becoming a Reflective Teacher ,Robert J. Marzano
- How to Plan you UDL Lessons, Brookes Publishing INC
- Goalbook App Toolkit:
- https://www.interventioncentral.org/response-to-intervention
- https://goalbookapp.com/toolkit/v
- STEMScopes: stemscopes@acceleratelearning.com
- P.A.X. https://www.paxohio.org/