Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners

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Sandra Aird, Director of English Language Development

Jessica Medulla, Special Education Operations Director

Angela Flora, Special Education Programming Director

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- **Learning Intentions:**

Today, we are learning to:

Understand how UDL connects EL strategies and Teacher Clarity to ensure equitable instructional access across a high school campus.

- **Success Criteria:**

We will know we are successful when we can:

- Describe the three core principles of UDL
- Identify where EL strategies align with UDL on our campuses
- Explain how UDL and Teacher Clarity work together to improve access for all students

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What is your level of expertise in UDL and ELLevation strategies?

I haven't started climbing yet

I'm on the climb

I've reached the summit

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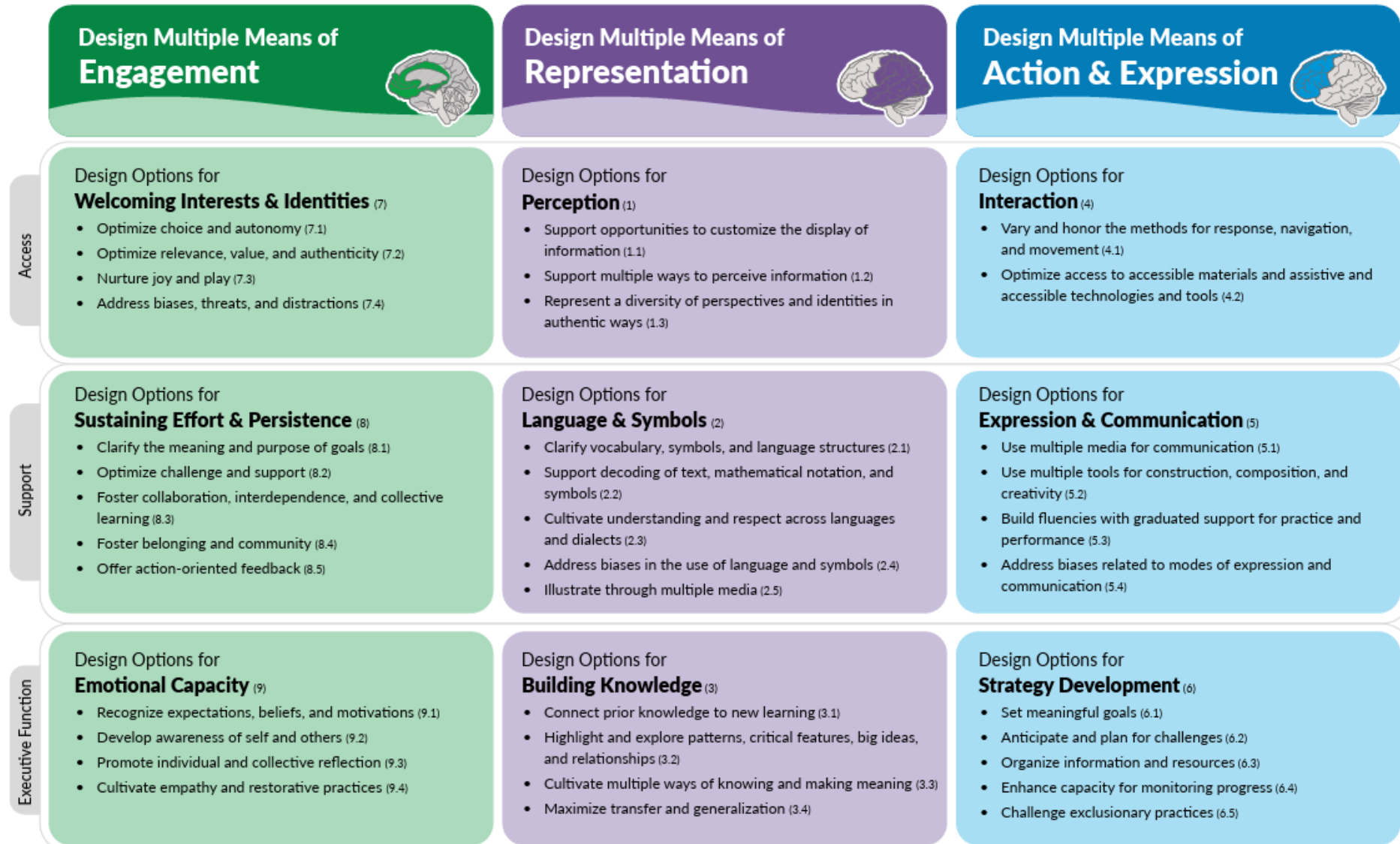# What is Universal Design for Learning (UDL)?

- **UDL is a framework to remove barriers and design learning for all students.**

- **Three Core Principles:**
  - Multiple Means of **Engagement**
  - Multiple Means of **Representation**
  - Multiple Means of **Action & Expression**

- **What is UDL?**

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Why UDL in High Schools?

- **High Schools are Complex:**
  - Large campuses with diverse learner needs
  - Varied course offerings (core, AP, electives, CTE)
  - Different instructional practices across departments
- **UDL = Leadership Tool for Coherence**

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The Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

The goal of UDL is **learner agency** that is purposeful & reflective, resourceful & authentic, strategic & action-oriented.

Design Multiple Means of Engagement

Access

Design Options for Welcoming Interests & Identities (7)
- Optimize choice and autonomy (7.1)
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity (7.2)
- Nurture joy and play (7.3)
- Address biases, threats, and distractions (7.4)

Support

Design Options for Sustaining Effort & Persistence (8)
- Clarify the meaning and purpose of goals (8.1)
- Optimize challenge and support (8.2)
- Foster collaboration, interdependence, and collective learning (8.3)
- Foster belonging and community (8.4)
- Offer action-oriented feedback (8.5)

Executive Function

Design Options for Emotional Capacity (9)
- Recognize expectations, beliefs, and motivations (9.1)
- Develop awareness of self and others (9.2)
- Promote individual and collective reflection (9.3)
- Cultivate empathy and restorative practices (9.4)

Design Multiple Means of Representation

Design Options for Perception (1)
- Support opportunities to customize the display of information (1.1)
- Support multiple ways to perceive information (1.2)
- Represent a diversity of perspectives and identities in authentic ways (1.3)

Design Options for Language & Symbols (2)
- Clarify vocabulary, symbols, and language structures (2.1)
- Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols (2.2)
- Cultivate understanding and respect across languages and dialects (2.3)
- Address biases in the use of language and symbols (2.4)
- Illustrate through multiple media (2.5)

Design Options for Building Knowledge (3)
- Connect prior knowledge to new learning (3.1)
- Highlight and explore patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships (3.2)
- Cultivate multiple ways of knowing and making meaning (3.3)
- Maximize transfer and generalization (3.4)

Design Multiple Means of Action & Expression

Design Options for Interaction (4)
- Vary and honor the methods for response, navigation, and movement (4.1)
- Optimize access to accessible materials and assistive and accessible technologies and tools (4.2)

Design Options for Expression & Communication (5)
- Use multiple media for communication (5.1)
- Use multiple tools for construction, composition, and creativity (5.2)
- Build fluencies with graduated support for practice and performance (5.3)
- Address biases related to modes of expression and communication (5.4)

Design Options for Strategy Development (6)
- Set meaningful goals (6.1)
- Anticipate and plan for challenges (6.2)
- Organize information and resources (6.3)
- Enhance capacity for monitoring progress (6.4)
- Challenge exclusionary practices (6.5)

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How UDL and EL Strategies Work Together

- **UDL and EL strategies are not separate initiatives — they are aligned approaches to improving access for all students.**

- **Key Connections:**
  - EL strategies are **practical examples** of UDL in action
  - Both prioritize **removing barriers** to content and language
  - Both focus on **engagement, representation, and expression** in instruction

- **UDL = the why and how**

- **EL strategies = the what teachers can do tomorrow**

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Crosswalk-ELLevation Strategies and UDL

- Where do these ELLevation strategies fit within the UDL framework?

UDL and MLL Instructional Practices Crosswalk

UDL Principle & Guideline	Related MLL Practices	How They Align
Engagement: Recruiting Interest Minimize threats/distractions, offer choice, relevance	• Anchor charts authored by students • Environmental print (visuals, realia, graphic organizers)	Visual supports and authentic student work promote engagement and ownership, reducing affective barriers.
Engagement: Sustaining Effort & Persistence Foster collaboration and community	• Student-to-student discussion • Group roles • Teacher scaffolds (e.g., wait time, modeling)	Collaborative structures support language production and encourage perseverance through peer interaction.
Engagement: Self-Regulation Develop self-assessment and reflection	• Language expectations stated before talking • Active listening requirements	Helps students monitor their language use and understand success criteria for participation.
Representation: Perception Customize display, offer visual/auditory alternatives	• Visuals for reading • Graphic organizers • Real-life objects and student work	Makes input comprehensible through multiple modalities, crucial for language acquisition.
Representation: Language & Symbols Clarify vocabulary, syntax, symbols	• Academic vocabulary planned • Language frames and word banks • Teacher modeling/paraphrasing	Direct vocabulary instruction and structured supports align with the need to make language transparent.
Representation: Comprehension Activate background knowledge, highlight patterns	• Chunked text • Scaffolds for reading comprehension • Mentor texts/models	Provides the structure MLLs need to make sense of text and build schema.
Action & Expression: Physical Action Vary response methods	• Numbered spoons, sticks, group roles	These tools allow for participation beyond traditional verbal methods, reducing linguistic pressure.
Action & Expression: Expression & Communication Use multiple media/tools	• Oral processing before writing • Writing frames and conferencing • Opportunities for speaking with sentence frames	Multimodal and scaffolded expression supports language development across all domains.
Action & Expression: Executive Functions Guide goal setting, planning	• Objectives posted that address language expectations • Writing task includes vocabulary/forms/discourse	Visible goals help students focus on both content and language, supporting intentional practice.

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UDL + Teacher Clarity = Access

- **Teacher Clarity** = Clear learning intentions, success criteria, and progressions
- **UDL** = Multiple ways to access and demonstrate those intentions
- **Together:**
  - Ensure all students know *what* they're learning
  - Allow flexibility in *how* they access and express it

UDL Principles in Action

- **Engagement:** The *why* of learning — motivating students and sustaining their interest

- **Teacher Clarity tie in**:
  - **Relevancy-**Helping students see the *purpose* behind the learning intention connects directly to UDL's emphasis on engagement.
  - **Clarity in Learning Intentions**: When students know what they're learning and why it matters, they're more motivated.

- **Example:** Students connect the causes of historical conflicts to present-day issues, choosing topics that interest them.

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UDL Principles in Action

- **Representation**: The *what* of learning — presenting information in multiple ways

- **Teacher Clarity Alignment**:
  - **Learning Progressions**: Break complex content into smaller, visible steps; helps scaffold instruction in accessible formats.
  - **Modeling & Examples**: Using varied formats (charts, visuals, text, video) aligns with UDL's emphasis on diverse input methods.

- **Example:** Concepts are taught using models, diagrams, simulations, and step-by-step vocabulary scaffolds.

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UDL Principles in Action

- **Action and Expression**: The *how* of learning — allowing students to show what they know in different ways

- **Teacher Clarity Alignment**:
  - **Success Criteria**: Provide a clear roadmap for students to demonstrate learning, but the *how* can be flexible.
  - **Assessment-Capable Learners**: Students can choose methods (presentations, writing, visuals) that align with their strengths, while still meeting the same goal.

- **Example:** Students demonstrate theme analysis through a podcast, essay, or visual storyboard aligned to clear success criteria.

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Activity – Learning Target Review

- **Review these learning intentions and success criteria from different departments:**
  - Are they clear?
  - Are they accessible to all learners?
  - How might students use the success criteria to reflect on their own learning?
  - How might UDL enhance access?

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Using AI to Support Inclusive Lesson Design

- Why Use AI in Lesson Planning?
  - Saves time adapting materials for students with IEPs and English Learners
  - Offers a starting point for creating lessons that are accessible, engaging, and aligned to standards
  - Encourages Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by planning *with all learners in mind*
  - Helps teachers anticipate barriers and provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression

- These tools aren't just for "fixing" lessons for a few students—they help design instruction that works for *everyone*.

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AI Tools that Support UDL

Tool	What It Does	How It Supports ALL Learners
MagicSchool.ai	Generates lesson plans, accommodations, leveled tasks, IEP supports, and visuals	Supports *Representation* and *Expression*—especially for IEPs and ELs
Diffit.me	Builds leveled reading passages, vocabulary lists, graphic organizers, and prompts	Makes *grade-level content accessible* for all learners, especially ELs and SPED
Microsoft Copilot	Integrates with Word/PowerPoint/Teams to help draft, summarize, and adapt content	Enhances *planning and collaboration*; great for differentiating core materials
ChatGPT	Provides ideas, feedback, scaffolds, and instructional supports when prompted	Helps with *clarifying learning goals* and developing inclusive instructional tasks

Identifying Barriers Across the Campus

- **Guiding Questions:**
  - Where are access gaps based on course or teacher?
  - Are success criteria visible across all content areas?
  - Where is scaffolding happening and what does it look like?

Leadership Strategies for Equity and Access

- You influence access through:
  - Department chair collaboration
  - Professional learning
  - Walkthrough tools
  - Master scheduling decisions
- **How can these structures reinforce inclusive Tier 1 instruction?**

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Closing Reflection & Commitments

- One way I can support instructional access in a complex schedule is…

- **Next Steps:**
  - Bring this lens into leadership team meetings
  - Use UDL & clarity principles in coaching and observation

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Can we...

- Describe the three core principles of UDL
- Identify where EL strategies align with UDL on our campuses
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