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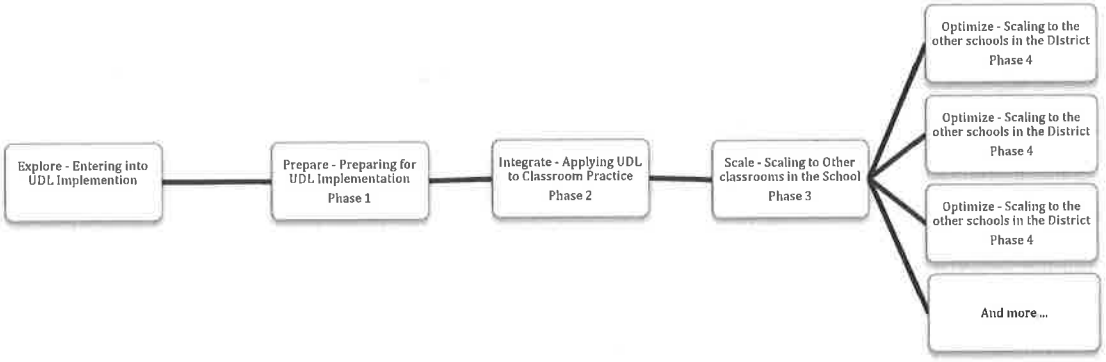
Universal Design for Learning - Implementing UDL

The UDL planning guide is a template to be used for creating your UDL Implementation plan with goals and strategic steps to actualize your vision of implementing UDL at the school, district, and organization levels. Implementation is characterized by a readiness to move beyond UDL awareness and a readiness to put UDL into practice at the classroom, school, district, or organizational levels. The goal of the UDL implementation process is to build capacity at the school and district levels to impact change in educator practice and support high achievement for all learners. The design of this approach to UDL implementation is iterative practice that focuses on trying out UDL in practice, reflecting about application of UDL, and working in teams that identify and address common needs and actions. Given that this template is a tool for your team, you should feel free to edit, revise, and individualize this tool to suit your unique goals, vision, and needs.

NOTE: Please know that this is an abbreviated version of the UDL implementation guide (in process), highlighting key steps to be considered as you engage in a UDL implementation process.



Entering into and Preparing for UDL Implementation

Step 1: Identify your UDL Team Members

List current team members and identify proposed team members who should be considered to join the team. The UDL Team is responsible for aligning the implementation of UDL with the organizational vision, setting goals, and identifying methods and materials for achieving the goals, and designing and/or identifying formative assessment measures for collecting data to determine if goals are being met. One member on the team should be identified as the team facilitator who will facilitate meetings, plan agenda, identify next steps, etc.

	Name	email	Responsibilities
District/organization administrator			Supports the long-term vision of UDL implementation and joins the team, as appropriate.
Principal or building-based administrator*			Provides support and guidance for the infrastructure required for team meetings, data collection, and engaging in UDL cycles of improvement.

Special education teacher or inclusion specialist* #			Supports teachers in the collection of data, design of lessons, and infusion of UDL into practice
Classroom teacher* #			Implements UDL into their classroom instructional practices
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Instructional Coach * #			Optional team member – Supports teachers in the collection of data, design of lessons, and infusion of UDL into practice
Other			
Other			

* Attends all team meetings
# Possible team facilitator

Step 2. Complete the Core Assumptions Checklist to ensure that the all team members know and agree to the core assumptions for successful implementation of UDL. The use of the checklist should support consensus on the core assumptions and serve as a tool for discussion.

We agree with the following assumptions:	
• A decision has been made at the school and/or district level that UDL is strongly considered for implementation.	Yes No
• Implementation is team-based and action-oriented.	Yes No
• UDL is not a curriculum, and participants in UDL implementation understand that UDL is a framework for designing and thinking about the local curriculum or the curriculum standards.	Yes No
• The UDL framework can lead to improved results for all learners.	Yes No
• Change is required to improve practice.	Yes No
• Small changes in educational practices can lead to big change over time.	Yes No
• Data must be collected continually to demonstrate progress.	Yes No
• Data inform the effectiveness of UDL implementation.	Yes No
• Data (evidence) can take many forms.	Yes No
• Other assumptions	Yes No
• Other assumptions	Yes No
• Other assumptions	Yes No

Step 3. Create a Vision of What UDL Will Look Like in Your Organization

Begin with the end in mind and consider what success will look like and what your team wants to accomplish. Brainstorm, discuss, and create the vision that will guide your work. Create a statement of how things will look when you are successful. Include sufficient detail to complete the picture. Vision statements are memorable, clear, and concise. Remember, you can always revise!

When creating your vision, think about:

- The organizational vision and how the vision for UDL is aligned to the organizational vision.
- The key stakeholders: students, parents, general educators, special educators, specialists, administrators, community members, etc. who will be impacted
- Problems to be solved and questions to be answered, and
- An image of success.

Examples of a vision statement:

- *Learning environments that recognize the variability of all learners and provide appropriate options to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to maximize their potential.*
- *All students will improve their ability to persist in challenging learning situations.*
- *All students will improve in the quality of their writing.*
- *All educators will have an understanding of the key concepts of UDL.*

1. Each individual team member, jots down three ideas to consider as they think about a vision for UDL.
2. Discuss the ideas and prioritize the ideas in relation to frequency and importance.
3. Come to consensus about the team's vision.

Personal ideas to consider as you define the vision.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Discuss and Prioritize.

Team's Vision Statement:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 4. Consider your current environment for UDL Implementation (this table is to be completed by the UDL Team.)

Develop a picture of your current environment in order to leverage resources, overcome barriers, and develop structure, policies, and systems to support UDL implementation.

When developing a picture of the current status, think about:

- Policies
- Effective leadership structures
- Climate
- Professional learning
- Team structures
- Methods of data collection
- Barriers and challenges
- Initiatives

What policies are in place to support UDL implementation?	
What leadership structures support change and implementation?	
How would you characterize the climate to support trying out new ideas and strategies?	
What professional learning structures are in place to support learning about UDL"	
What team structures are in place, such as professional learning communities, content or grade level meetings, peer partners, etc. to support collaboration among educators?	
What methods of data collection are in place to support use of formative and summative data to support decision-making and influence instructional practices?	
What barriers and challenges will impact achievement of your vision? How do you plan to minimize these barriers and maximize the implementation of UDL?	

What initiatives can support UDL implementation and how can you align initiatives with UDL?	
What has been most successful in your environment to impact change and improvement in student results?	

Step 5. Create a foundation for applying UDL to practice

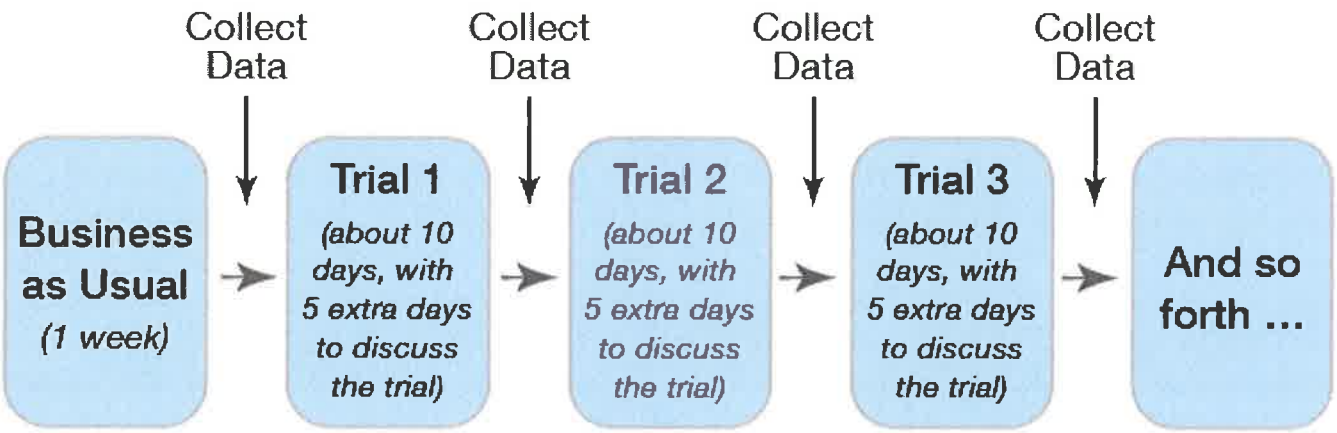
- Determine how the team will learn about UDL, such as engage in a book study, take on online course, attend an institute, participate in an on-site professional learning on UDL, etc.
    - We will…
- Identify your goals for implementing UDL and determine how you will measure progress. The goal should be student-focused, measureable, and well defined. The goal should be relevant for all learners, i.e. not a goal that is specifically designed for a subset of learners.
    - Our goals are to…
- Build capacity in data literacy to support data collection and analysis during UDL implementation.
    - We will learn and use formative data to…
- Determine how you will measure progress toward achieving the goals.
    - We will measure student progress by using...
- Identify how you will track teacher application of he UDL guidelines.
    - We will track how teachers apply the guidelines to their practice by…
- Create a regularly scheduled team meeting time every 2 – 3 weeks to discuss trials.
    - We will meet…

Applying UDL to Classroom Practice

Step 6. Engage in the trials of applying UDL to practice

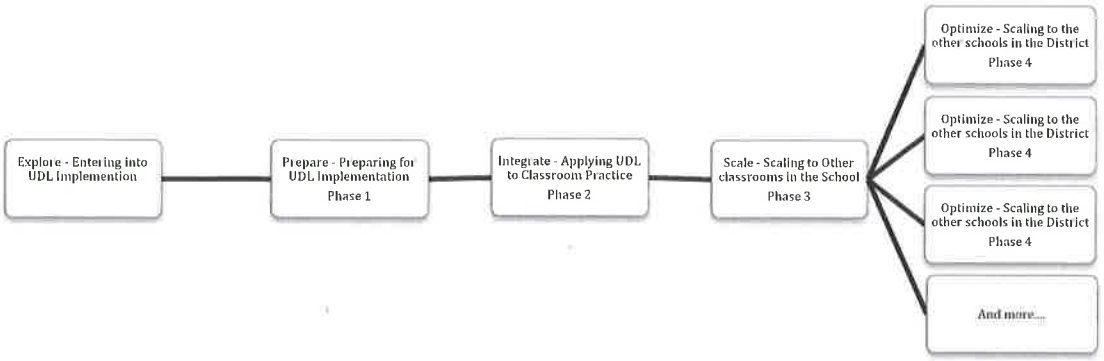
"If it doesn't happen in the classroom, it doesn't happen." Tom Hehir

The following figure represents a model of applying the UDL guidelines to instructional practice and is aligned with Carnegie's six core principles of improvement science (http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/our-ideas/six-core-principles-improvement/) which implements rapid trials of applying new strategies to guide the development, revision and continued fine-tuning of the strategy. In the UDL implementation process, we recommend applying one guideline or checkpoint for each trial. This approach to UDL implementation initially focuses on classroom practices and gradually scales to other classrooms and then to other schools in the district with an eye to district-wide UDL implementation. According to Dean Fixsen (http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/sites/nirn.fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/NIRN-MonographFull-01-2005.pdf), implementation can take any where between five to seven years.



Engaging in the system of "learn, do, reflect, and revise" process I will be able to answer the question: How do you know that the application of UDL to your instructional practices impacts student outcomes?

Answer: I have identified specific goals that I am focused on over the course of several trials. I gradually roll out a different UDL guideline or UDL checkpoint for each trial. I have baseline data that provides me with a starting point before I apply the guideline to my practice. I have designed or identified measure of student progress over the course of the trials. I track student data and track how I am applying the guidelines to my practice. Basically and most importantly, I have evidence of impact specifically tied to goals. The data tells me if what I am doing is either working or not working and then I can either revise what I am doing or continue to do what is effective and potentially impacting all my students.

Scaling UDL beyond the Classroom

When the UDL team can answer the question raised in the preceding paragraph, the team is ready to engage other teams in the school and/or district, following a similar process of learning about UDL, engaging in short trials of applying UDL to practice, collecting student data, and tracking teacher integration of the UDL guidelines into practice. Over time, there will increased evidence of "what UDL looks like in practice".