

Universal Design for Learning Implementation: The Journey of One Middle School

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Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework that is based on over twenty years of research in the learning sciences that guides the development of flexible learning environments by accommodating for individual learning differences. It provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials and assessments that work for all students by eliminating barriers from the beginning of the instructional planning process.

GOAL

•To increase English Language Arts achievement of all seventh- grade students by incorporating the three principles of Universal Design for Learning across environments, materials, instruction and assessments.

Implementation

Three 7th grade English Language Arts educators (general, special, and English language learner) volunteered to participate in the pilot.

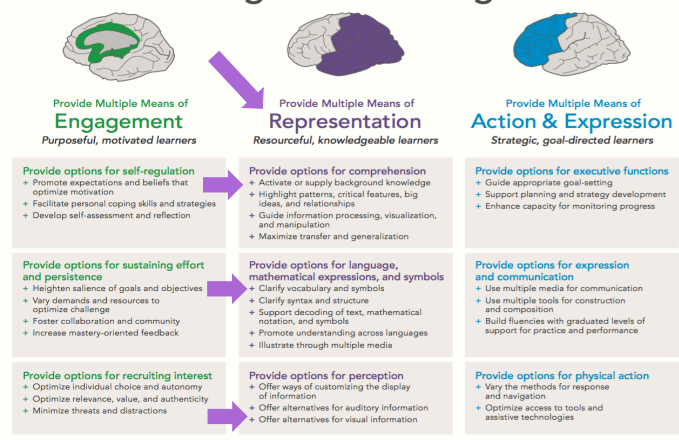
Baseline classroom observation data was collected on the implementation of UDL guidelines. Student engagement data was also collected during each observation.

Participants attended a full-day workshop on UDL once per week across 10 weeks. Following observations, educators completed a self-reflection on the lesson observed. Reflections, feedback, and strategies for implementation were discussed at weekly coaching sessions. Modeling of instructional strategies were demonstrated by ACCESS instructional coaches.

Teacher and student interviews were conducted and the Student Engagement Instrument(SEI) was administered (pre/post).

At the conclusion of the project, data was analyzed and shared with participants (see results below).

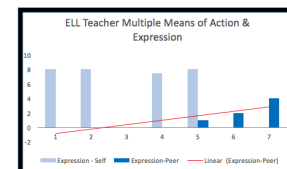
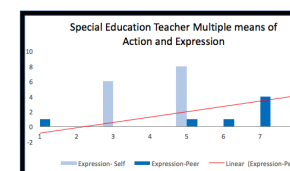
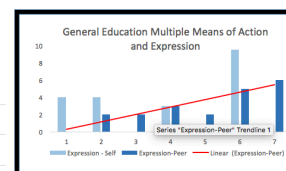
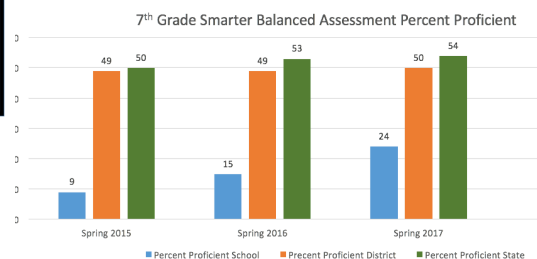
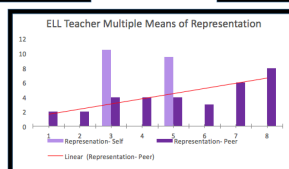
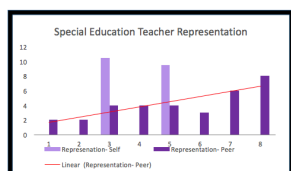
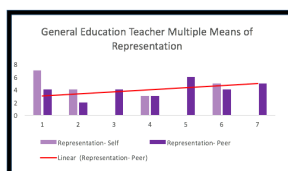
Universal Design for Learning Guidelines



"We should have our homework and classwork on the computer so that if I don't understand something, I could read something or watch a video to help me understand."
-Middle School Student

"It is good to work in a group because I can help other students who don't know English. We work in groups more now."
-Middle School Student

DATA ANALYSIS



Conclusions

- Coaching must be specific to individual needs
- Observation and coaching should also occur during planning
- Modeling of lessons is essential to successful implementation of instructional strategies
- Peer collaboration is key to educator "buy-in"
- Administrative support is critical for implementation and capacity building (Scheduling support, access to instructional materials, and accountability)

Capacity Building

The UDL Initiative will expand in the Fall of 2017-2018. A multi-level approach to implementation will be utilized. All 6th, 7th and 8th grade English language arts teachers will receive professional development that will include in-depth coaching support. In addition, there will be a whole-school component that will include professional development and limited technical assistance based on the principles of the Universal Design for Learning framework.

Areas of Focus

English Language Arts Teachers

- Assistance with classroom set up with a focus on the UDL environment
- Development of goals for both teacher and students
- Video recording of lessons to assist with teacher self-reflection

Whole School Professional Development

- Whole staff Professional Development (Introduction and Advanced UDL)
- UDL Book study (online discussion board, modules and PLC discussions)
- UDL Technical Assistance (UDL Tickets) – teacher request for help with lesson planning, environment or UDL 101
- Collaboration with administration to add a component of UDL to "walk-through" observation checklist and into the School Success Plan