

The Five Phases of the UDL Implementation Process: Tools to Guide Your Journey

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Abstract

Educators are as variable as students, making a one-size-fits-all approach to UDL implementation ineffective. This session explores five phases of UDL implementation through CAST's system of UDL-infused tools that help educators to integrate UDL into instructional practice, and leaders to apply data to school and district decision-making aimed at developing capacity for success systemic change.

Keywords

Implementation; CAST; Systemic change

INTRODUCTION

For the last quarter century, CAST has researched the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and raised awareness among educators about how the UDL framework can improve instruction. During the last three years, CAST has expanded its focus from supporting schools and districts who are exploring UDL implementation, to helping them move beyond the exploration phase. These advanced phases of UDL implementation work to specifically prepare them for UDL implementation, to address the systematic integration of the UDL framework with current successful initiatives and practices, and to scale effective policies, procedures and practices system-wide.

BACKGROUND

In 2010, CAST received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to investigate, develop, pilot and implement a systems change approach that applies the UDL framework to professional learning and school improvement.

Working with educators from four school districts (Baltimore County, MD; Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, Columbus, IN; Cecil County, MD; Chelmsford, MA), we uncovered a variety of essential needs: Teachers are as variable as their students, therefore they need high quality, flexible professional learning that provides them with the opportunity to learn from, share ideas with, and collaborate with peers. Teachers also need to access effective strategies, materials, and resources through web-based tools, and to learn and reflect on their practice in a learning environment that is personalized and supportive. Finally, because district and school leaders are key to successful UDL implementation, they need tools to guide and

measure progress through a process that recognizes and supports the variability within their systems.

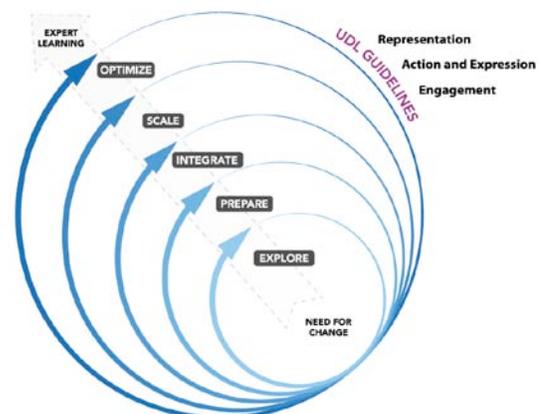
To address these critical needs, CAST applied neuroscience and learning science research captured by the UDL framework (Rose & Meyer, 2002) to systemic change research (Fixsen, et al., 2005; Fullan, 2010) to create CAST's five phases of the UDL implementation process and a series of UDL-infused tools and resources that assist district and school leaders in effective decision-making that leads to successful UDL implementation.

CAST's UDL IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

CAST's UDL Implementation Process (see Figure 1) integrates research about individual, organizational and educational change with the UDL framework to provide K-12 school staff with a customized series of professional learning opportunities, professional coaching, facilitation, supports, resources and tools needed throughout the phases of the UDL implementation process. CAST's *UDL Implementation Process* is adapted from work of Fixsen, Naom, Blasé, Friedman, and Wallace (2005), and anchor on five phases of UDL implementation:

- Explore
- Prepare
- Integrate
- Scale
- Optimize

Figure 1. CAST UDL Implementation Process



In order to reflect what we know about how humans learn and the existing variability within any organization or system, CAST's implementation resources and tools offer

multiple media formats and varied options for expressing decisions and plans. CAST's survey instruments gauge participant learning and engagement throughout the five phases.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF CAST'S EFFORTS TO APPLY UDL AT A SYSTEMATIC LEVEL

To build a common understanding of CAST's model of UDL implementation, we share portions of the National Center on UDL multi-media presentation [*UDL Implementation: A Process of Change*](#) (National Center on Universal Design for Learning, 2012) during this session. In addition, we walk participants through CAST's system of UDL-infused tools and resources, including the UDL Self-Reflection tool, UDL Implementation Strategy Guide, and UDL Knowledge, Beliefs and Practice survey.

CAST's implementation tools and resources are designed to (a) help classroom educators to integrate UDL into instructional practice, and (b) guide district and school leaders through the implementation process by using authentic data and decision-making tools.

CAST's UDL implementation tools are designed to assist school and district leadership with critical decision-making. Using these implementation services, tools and resources, CAST is assisting numerous states (i.e., Arkansas, Georgia, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin) and school districts (i.e., Amherst, MA; Los Angeles, CA; New York, NY; Revere, MA; San Diego, CA; Washington, DC) with successful UDL implementation efforts.

We share preliminary results of these ongoing efforts to apply UDL at a systemic level in order to build capacity for continuous improvement.

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