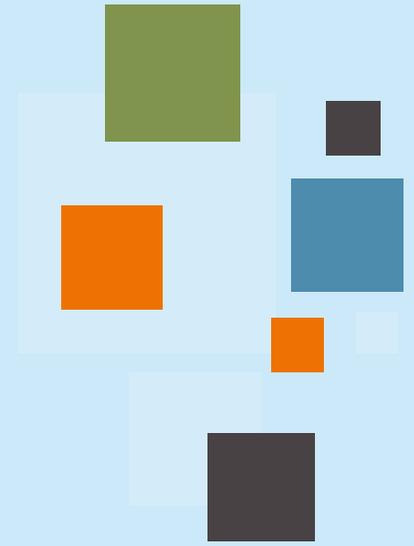


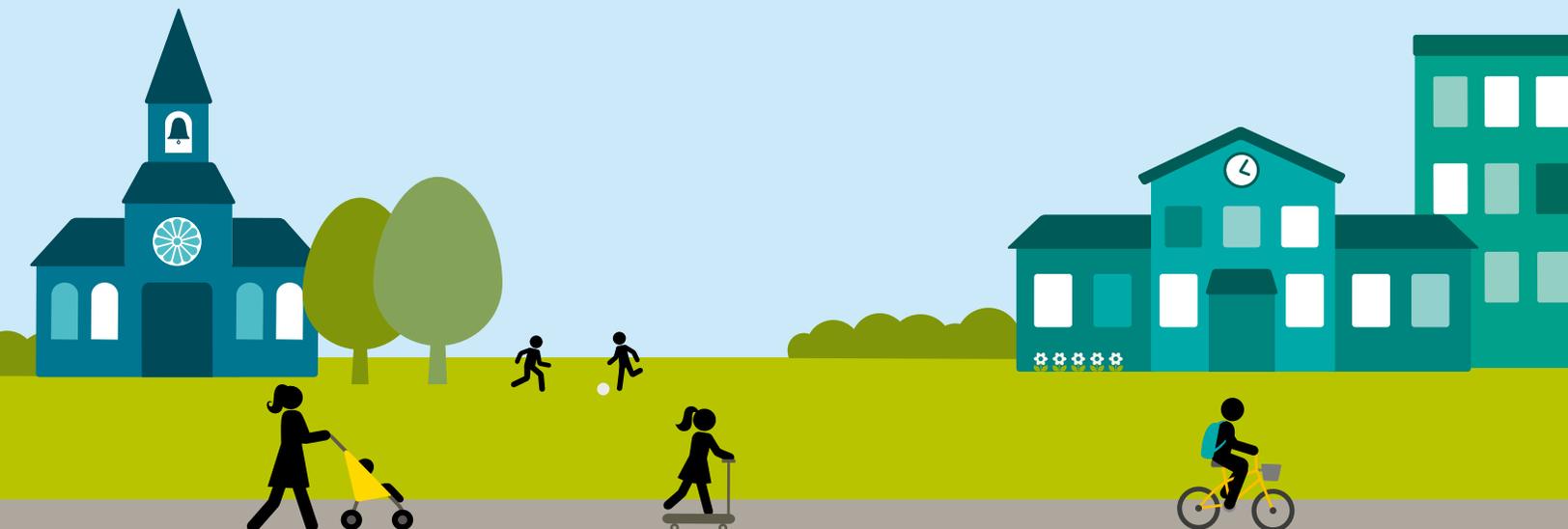


AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION



Choosing the Right Learning Management System to Support Universal Design for Personalized Learning

Universal Design for Learning principles provide a framework that supports personalized learning for every student. Consider how a learning management system can become the hub where curriculum, instructional management, assessment, professional learning, and communication systems are integrated to support student-centered and student-directed learning.



Introduction

Many districts are choosing Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as their instructional lens to personalize learning for all students. Because UDL assumes that all students learn differently, it can be embedded in instructional design for each and every student, including students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs). What this means in practice is that all students have the same instructional goals, but their individual learning paths and the amount of support they require may vary. UDL minimizes barriers and maximizes flexibility for all learners in a learner-centered environment by intentionally and systematically including all students in the process. **UDL offers such a clear benefit to learning that the new federal law, [Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\)](#), encourages states to incorporate UDL instructional strategy in school assessments and educational technology.**

Learning management systems provide extensive support to streamline and integrate the systems required to efficiently manage UDL across a district. Good end-to-end system solutions provide a home base for curriculum, instruction, resources, instruction management, assessment, and professional learning to be integrated with robust communication tools that allow transparency and access for educators, students, and parents.



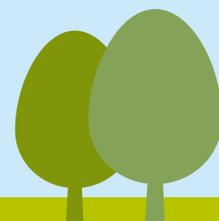
What is UDL Exactly?

The principles of the UDL framework call for flexible options in curriculum that offer learners:

- Multiple representations of content (Recognition)
- Multiple means of action and expression (Strategic)
- Multiple means of engagement (Affective)

Within the UDL model students choose how they consume and create content and communicate with their teachers and peers. Blended learning, a combination of online and face-to-face, creates more options for students to acquire content in different ways (text, audio, video, visual) as well as to demonstrate their understanding of the content in multiple ways (paper, presentation, video, audio, game). The flexibility of formats increases student engagement and allows students to exercise choice or student agency, which increases their sense of ownership in their learning. **Now, they have a vested interest in their own success.**

Transitioning to student-centered and student-directed learning is a 21st Century concept which supports the idea that the purpose of education is to help students become expert learners and creators of content - not just consumers of content or repositories of facts. With every piece of data in the known universe just a keystroke away, it is really the application of knowledge to new situations through problem-solving and critical thinking that will determine successful learning. And universal design is a proven method to achieve that outcome for every student, which is why UDL is supported by ESSA and the Department of Education.



How an LMS Should Support UDL

Learning management systems (LMSs) can help districts implement UDL principles efficiently by putting their curriculum, instruction management, resources, communication tools, and professional learning all in one system. However, not all LMSs are created equal. Let's consider how a LMS can support the implementation of UDL principles across a district.



PRINCIPLE 1 - PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION

GUIDELINE

Provide options for perception:

- Offer ways to customize the display of information
- Offer alternatives for auditory information
- Offer alternatives for visual information

Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols:

- Clarify vocabulary and symbols
- Clarify syntax and structure
- Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, symbols
- Promote understanding across languages
- Illustrate through multiple media

Provide options for comprehension

- Activate or supply background knowledge
- Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships
- Guide information processing, visualization, and manipulation
- Maximize transfer and generalization

HOW AN LMS SHOULD SUPPORT UDL:

Use the LMS to show print in larger sizes and in different colors. Use text to speech option. Offer resources in different media: text, audio, video. Record demonstrations for students to view/hear later. Use rich media such as embedded graphics, visuals, and animations.

Use a visual editor such as WIRIS to display mathematical expressions and symbols. Integrate Google translation widget. Show students how to access language settings. Provide captioned video. Use OS or browser-based text-to-speech options. Use rich text editor to bring in pictures, slideshows, video, and audio. Provide a variety of resources including games, self-assessments, video, and text.

Create a pre-reading survey, provide links, and supply context for background information. Share essential questions and goals. Use discussion boards, video, and audio for communication between students. Demonstrate how to submit work appropriately, using text alone or integrated with rich media. Create communities to share ideas, lessons, and resources.



PRINCIPLE 2 - PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION AND EXPRESSION

GUIDELINE

Provide options for physical action

- Vary the methods for response and navigation
- Optimize access to tools and assistive technologies

Provide options for expression and communication

- Use multiple media for communication
- Use multiple tools for construction and composition
- Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance

Provide options for executive functions

- Guide appropriate goal-setting
- Support planning and strategy development
- Facilitate managing information and resources
- Enhance capacity for monitoring progress

HOW AN LMS SHOULD SUPPORT UDL:

Use discussion boards so that students can collaborate with each other. Support student self-reflection using ePortfolios and blogs. Let students can create communities around specific topics, ideas, or areas of interest; collaboration fine-tunes communication and critical thinking skills.

Use the LMS platform to plan and deliver engaging standards-based lessons and assessments. Use the platform's communication tools to get feedback from students, parents, and teachers.

Help students learn how to set appropriate goals and objectives encouraging them to help plan and manage their own individual learning plans. Show students how to organize and plan their own events. Use reports to help students learn how to evaluate their own progress.



PRINCIPLE 3 - PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT

GUIDELINE

Provide options for recruiting interest:

- Optimize individual choice and autonomy
- Optimize relevance, value, and authenticity
- Minimize threats and distractions

Provide options for sustaining effort & persistence

- Heighten salience of goals and objectives
- Vary demands and resources to optimize challenge
- Foster collaboration and community
- Increase mastery-oriented feedback

Provide options for self-regulation

- Promote expectations and beliefs that optimize motivation
- Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies
- Develop self-assessment and reflection

HOW AN LMS SHOULD SUPPORT UDL:

Give students pre-lesson surveys or polls to allow choice or to help connect a topic idea to something relevant or interesting to them. Allow students to choose projects to work on from a list of approved ideas. Let them have choices about how they show mastery of a concept.

Help students highlight their goals and learning objectives. Provide students with a variety of resources including interactive games, discussion boards, videos, podcasts, and text. Demonstrate how students can create and manage their own communities. Use rubrics to give students actionable feedback for each of their goals and objectives.

Use individual learning plans for students to create personal goals and track progress. Encourage students to use blogs and ePortfolios to self-reflect and to share with others to elicit feedback. Allow students to create personal and peer assessments for additional reflection and feedback.

Buying Checklist for an LMS that Supports UDL

On the next page we have laid out a check list for you to see whether or not your current LMS supports UDL. Read through each point and tick the boxes where your LMS meets the standards set out by the ESSA.

Each question has been allocated a certain number of points so that you can calculate whether or not your current LMS supports the principles of ESSA and Personalized Learning through UDL. After you complete the check list, add up the corresponding points for the statements that you checked off.

Question 1 - 5 points

Question 2 - 10 points

Question 3 - 25 points

Question 4 - 15 points

Question 5 - 5 points

Question 6 - 25 points

Question 7 - 10 points

Question 8 - 5 points

What does your score mean?

If you scored 0-49 Points your LMS is Dissatisfactory

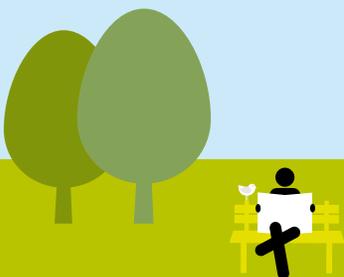
There is no or very limited ability for your current LMS to support ESSA and Personalized Learning through UDL. By supporting the 3 principles of UDL, itslearning can provide you a roadmap to get you from where you are today to where you want to go. Learn how itslearning helped Bartholomew Consolidated School District and Houston Independent School District do just that, in our new eBook [How to Make Personalized Learning a Reality in Your District](#), or contact itslearning today!

If you scored 50-79 Points your LMS is Questionable

There is only a moderate ability for your LMS to support ESSA and Personalized Learning through UDL. You have quite a way to go. But don't worry, itslearning supports all 3 principles of UDL and can get you back on track. Learn how itslearning helped Bartholomew Consolidated School District and Houston Independent School District do just that, in our new eBook [How to Make Personalized Learning a Reality in Your District](#) or contact itslearning today!

If you scored 80+ Points your LMS is Acceptable

Congratulations, you are currently supporting a majority of the principles of ESSA and Personalized Learning through UDL. Keep up the good work. Let itslearning help you get all the way 100%! itslearning can help you take your curriculum, instructional management, assessment, professional learning and communication to the next level. Learn how itslearning helped Bartholomew Consolidated School District and Houston Independent School District do just that, in our new eBook [How to Make Personalized Learning a Reality in Your District](#) or contact itslearning today!



1 Curriculum, instruction, communication, and professional learning tools are housed in one integrated LMS.

2 Course management and delivery are aligned to the UDL principles and the learning platform allows teachers to deliver engaging, standards-based lessons.

3 A robust lesson planner helps teachers bring together curriculum resources, standards, instructional frameworks, and assessments accessible to all stakeholders.

4 Communication tools include text, audio, video and other rich media to facilitate collaboration as well as communication between students, between students and teachers and between parents and teachers. This enables the three aspects of UDL - Access, Engage, and Express with multiple media options.

5 Professional learning is delivered by the platform providing an example to teachers of how to personalize learning through UDL principles in a blended learning environment.

6 Real-time assessment and other data are available to help teachers drive instruction. The platform has a recommendation engine that serves up standards-based content for students who need additional review or remediation in a variety of formats that support UDL principles.

7 Teachers and students can easily create communities around specific topics, units, or areas of interest; communities facilitate collaboration and improve communication and critical thinking skills as students interact with each other and their teachers.

8 Systems are mobile-friendly and able to keep the wider learning community fully engaged in order to successfully create anywhere/anytime learning.

TOTAL:



Choosing the Right Learning Management System to Support Universal Design for Personalized Learning

About itslearning

itslearning meets all the LMS criteria identified above. itslearning ties together the instructional needs of educators including curriculum development and planning; delivery of courses and instructional activities; student assessment; and data analysis, including standards mastery reporting. Designed specifically for K-12, the itslearning platform supports UDL and helps schools and districts make the transition to student-directed learning. Students exercise agency over how they consume and create content and demonstrate their mastery of it.

Teachers use itslearning every day to access professional development, collaborate with peers, create assessments, personalize instruction, deliver and track assignments, and drive student achievement.

Learn more about how itslearning supports UDL principles at www.itslearning.net

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AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION

