



NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE CENTER
FOR **TEACHER QUALITY**

Challenges and Considerations in Measuring the Growth of Students With Disabilities in Performance Evaluation

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June 2012

Series of Webinars

Webinar 1: State Approaches to Measuring Student Growth For the Purpose of Teacher Evaluation

Prerecorded: <http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/osep2012/>

Webinar 2: Challenges and Considerations in Measuring Growth of Students With Disabilities

Date: June 7, 2012

Time: 1 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Webinar 3: Measuring the Growth of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment

Date: August 9, 2012

Time: 1 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

Webinar 2: Learning Targets

- Increase awareness of the challenges of using growth of students with disabilities in teacher and leader evaluations
- Review considerations states and districts should contemplate when designing systems that include the academic growth of students with disabilities to measure teacher effectiveness
- Highlight needed areas of research to validate state and district effort

Today's Presenters

Lynn Holdheide, Research Associate at Vanderbilt University/National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

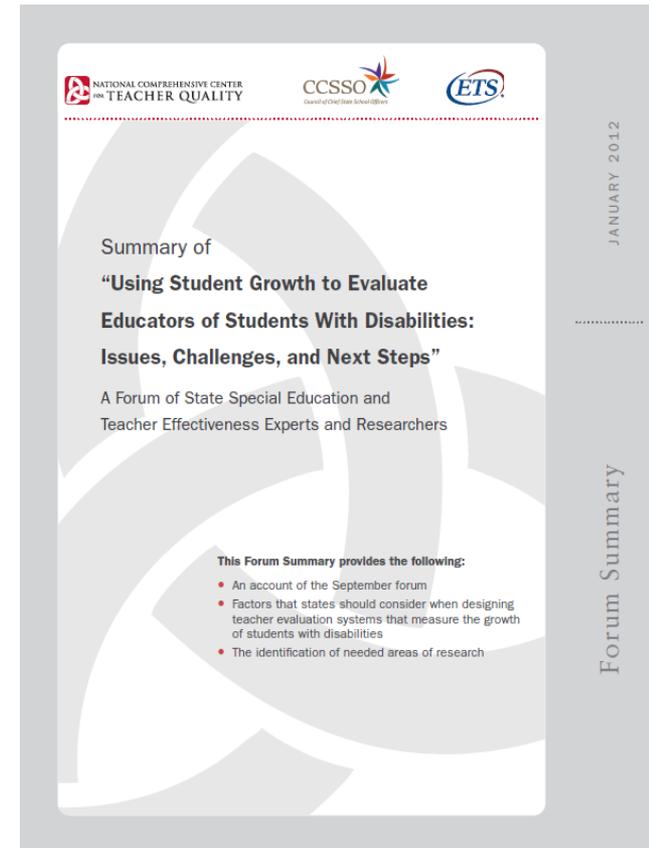
Heather Buzick, Research Scientist in the Center for Foundational and Validity Research at ETS

Marcella Franczkowski, Assistant State Superintendent at Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services, Maryland State Department of Education

Jean Satterfield, Assistant State Superintendent, Division of Certification and Accreditation, Maryland State Department of Education

A Forum of State Special Education and Teacher Effectiveness Experts and Researchers

- To identify the challenges in using the growth of students with disabilities to evaluate educators
- To develop considerations for states when designing systems that include the academic growth of students with disabilities
- To identify needed areas of research



http://www.tqsource.org/pdfs/TQ_Forum_SummaryUsing_Student_Growth.pdf

The Goal of Teacher Evaluation

*The **ultimate** goal of all teacher evaluation should be...*

**TO IMPROVE
TEACHING AND
LEARNING**

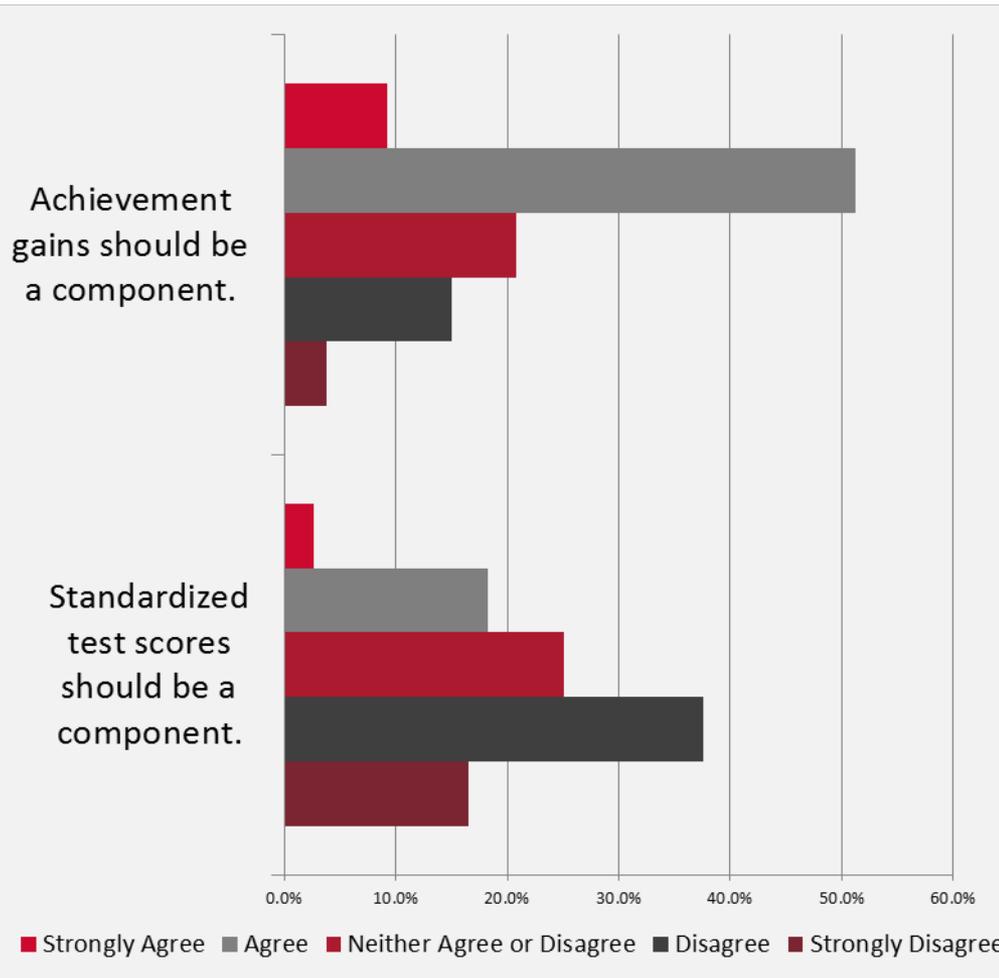
Promoting and Ensuring Accountability Using Student Growth

- Electing to exclude the scores of students with disabilities within value-added modeling or other measures of student learning could greatly limit teacher accountability.
- When growth is not accurately measured for students with disabilities or performance expectations are not aligned with possible learning outcomes, teachers may be less likely to accept students with disabilities in their classrooms.

Race to the Top Definition of Student Growth

- **Student growth** means the change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms (p. 11).

Measuring Student Growth



- Teachers want to be confident that the measures used are a fair and accurate representation of both student growth and their contribution to that growth.

Measuring Teachers' Contributions to Student Learning Growth: A Summary of Current Models

Model	Description
Student learning objectives	Teachers assess students at beginning of year and set objectives and then assess again at end of year; principal or designee works with teachers to determine success
Subject and grade alike team models	Teachers meet in grade-specific and/or subject-specific teams to consider and agree on appropriate measures that they will all use to determine their individual contributions to student learning growth
Pretests and posttests model	Educators identify or create pretests and posttests for every grade and subject
Schoolwide value added	Teachers in tested subjects and grades receive their own value-added score; <i>all other teachers get the schoolwide average</i>

Potential Measures of Student Learning

- Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
- Schoolwide Value Added
- Value Added and Growth Modeling
 - Specific challenges for students with disabilities
 - Considerations for states and districts
 - Potential research

Potential Challenges for Students With Disabilities in the SLO Process

- Students with disabilities could be overlooked in the SLO process. Therefore, the growth (or lack thereof) could go unnoticed.
- Increased need for teacher capacity to collect, interpret, and monitor student performance data against standards-aligned, rigorous goals.

Potential Challenges for Students With Disabilities in the SLO Process

- The SLO process cannot control for variables outside a school's or a teacher's control.
- The comparability of measurement and student growth is compromised because the process may not be standardized or objective.
- Associated high stakes could prompt a desire to establish easily attainable student learning goals.

Implementation Considerations

- SLOs for students with disabilities may become a responsibility of special education teachers only, minimizing the need for accountability.
- Teachers with little training in special education may struggle to establish rigorous yet achievable goals for students with disabilities.

Assessments Used to Determine Growth

- **Training!** The success of assessment is largely dependent on the quality of the assessments—their alignment to the standards, the fidelity of implementation, and the interpretation of the data.
- Ensure that assessments are accessible and that student learning can be accurately measured.
- Ensure that these assessments account for students working below or above grade-level standards.

Sampling of State Considerations

- Ensure that growth for all students, including students with disabilities, is accounted for in the SLO process.
- Encourage collaboration between general and special education teachers to construct SLOs to ensure alignment with the established standards AND to accommodate the specific learning needs.
- Encourage that SLOs can be tiered so that student targets can be differentiated according to the present levels of student performance.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

Consistent messaging that special and general educators use the same process to establish SLOs for their students.

- There is a requirement that all students are covered under an SLO:
 - General education teachers are responsible for the progress and mastery of all students on their rosters, including students with disabilities.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Teachers are encouraged to set tiered goals so that targets are differentiated according to students' present levels of performance and needs.
- General education and special education teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively to construct objectives that are in alignment with those of the general education class but accommodate the specific learning needs of students with disabilities.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Partnered with special education teachers in early adopter districts and local institutions of higher education to draft sample SLOs.
- Example SLOs for students with disabilities are located at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/SLO.aspx>.

Rhode Island Student Learning Objectives

- Guidance document that provides recommendations on SLO development across context

http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/Docs/SPED_FAQ_revised.pdf

- The special education teacher who coteaches as part of a grade level or content team (coplanning, instructing, and assessing)
- The special education teacher who does not fully coteach with a general education teacher but who works with students with disabilities across several classrooms
- The special education teacher who works with students with disabilities across several grade levels who are not also assigned to a general education teacher

Potential Research Questions

- What is the relationship between SLOs and value-added scores for teachers in tested subjects, with a specific focus on students with disabilities?
- What is the quality of SLOs, including comparing SLOs developed with a strong alignment to state standards using a standardized measurement process to those that are not?
- Does the SLO process ensure that the learning trajectory is appropriately established and growth adequately measured for students with disabilities?

Groupwide Value-Added Challenges

- Teachers may be held accountable for students they have never taught or had the opportunity to influence.
- Accountability for the growth (or lack thereof) of students with disabilities may not be captured or monitored if students with disabilities are not included in the value-added scores.
- Teachers may not be as motivated to improve student mastery of state standards if there is no direct accountability for their content areas.

Schoolwide Value-Added Considerations

- Ensure that schoolwide scores are used in combination with other measures of student learning more directly tied to instruction.
- Include students with disabilities in schoolwide results so that teachers are held accountable for growth of all students.

Challenges to Using Student Growth and Value-Added Scores in Teacher Evaluation Specific to Students With Disabilities

Two Broad Areas That Can Impact the Meaning of Value-Added Scores

- Measurement challenges
 - Various threats to the validity of inferences about academic growth
- Complex instructional context
 - Can impact evaluation of both general education and special education teachers

Measurement Challenges (I)

- Testing accommodation use
 - Inconsistent use across years
 - Particularly for those associated with a score boost (e.g., read aloud, extended time)
- Extreme low performance on linear state assessments
 - Difficult to get a good measure of growth
 - Systematic and predictable

Measurement Challenges (II)

- Small samples or missing data
 - Some special education classrooms
 - Lower match rates for students with disabilities due to mobility, absence on test dates, etc.
- Technical properties of alternate assessments
 - Many do not support statistical models that are used for teacher evaluation.

Instructional Context

- Shared responsibility between general education and special education teachers
- Time spent in the regular classroom learning content
- The performance of all students in a classroom may be impacted—positively or negatively—by the presence of a coteacher, extra funding support for special services, peer behaviors, or other factors not directly related to an individual teacher.

Potential Consequences

- Teachers aren't evaluated on how well they differentiate their instruction
- Can create disincentives to accept particular students into the classroom
- Perceived unfairness to teachers with higher numbers of students with disabilities

Considerations for States

- Use multiple measures and consider weights to reflect the amount of evidence in support of validity and accuracy for value-added scores
 - Based on transparent judgment initially; then empirically based
- Support accessible assessments that offer precise measurement along the entire score scale (e.g., multistage adaptive assessment, universal design)
- Create a standardized system to accurately assign, monitor, and record the use of testing accommodations
- Work with teachers to understand the quality of their individual value-added score given their particular classroom context
- Adopt a roster validation system; use full roster method to give 100 percent credit to all teachers in a coteaching situation

Needed Research

- Conduct routine validation research that includes scores from students with disabilities
- Conduct sensitivity studies with specific variables relevant to students with disabilities (i.e., accommodation use, entry and exit from special education)
- Test assumptions regarding the presence of students with disabilities in general education teachers' value-added scores
- Establish guidelines for minimum sample sizes

MARYLAND'S INFORMATION

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Marcella E. Franczkowski

Assistant State Superintendent

Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services

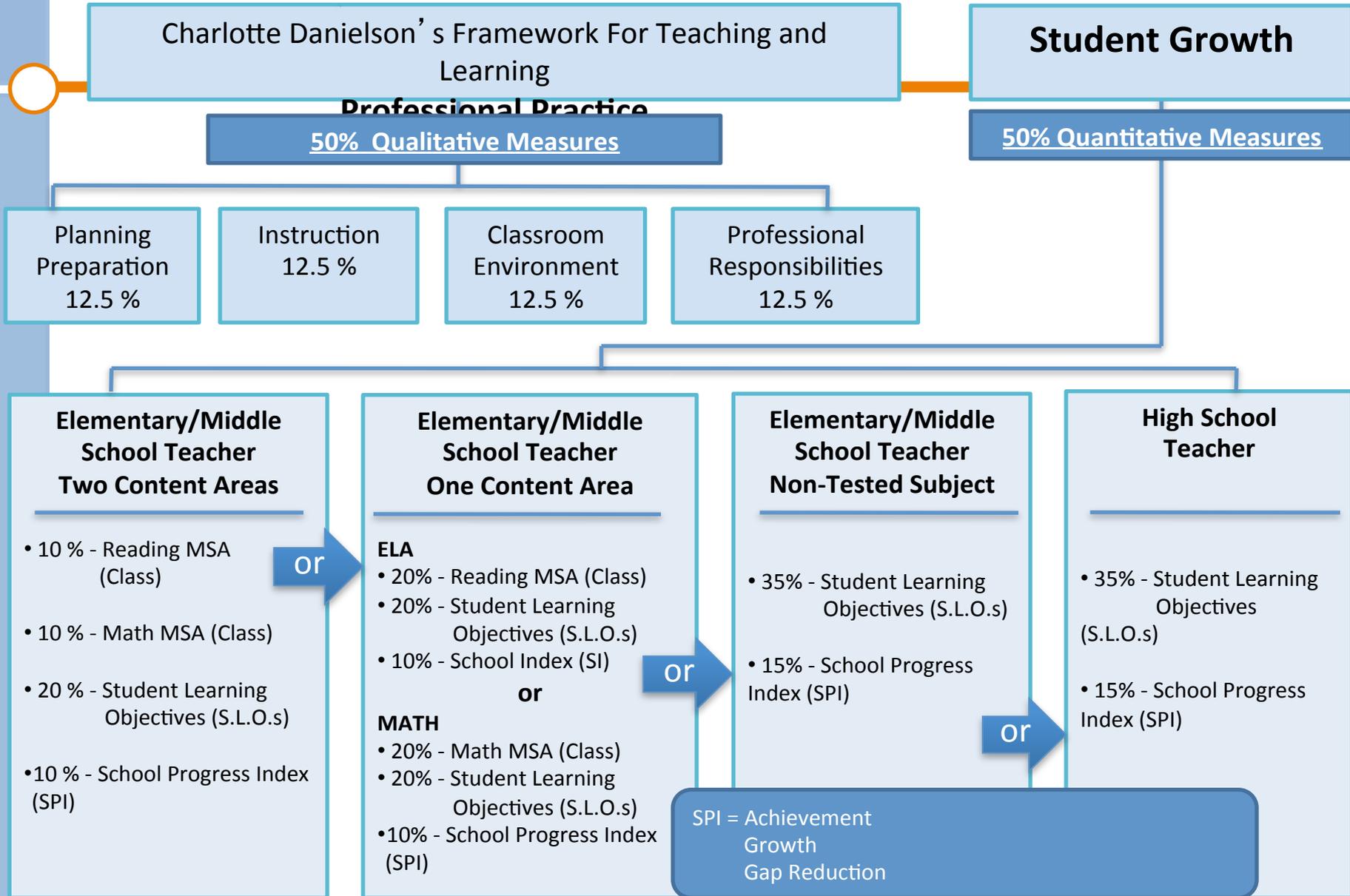
Jean E. Satterfield

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Division of Certification and Accreditation



Maryland State Model for Teacher Evaluation



Alternate Maryland State Assessment

ALT-MSA

- **Maryland Assessment Program**
 - Maryland School Assessment (MSA): reading, mathematics, science
 - Alternate Maryland School Assessment (Alt-MSA)
- **Portfolio assessment**
 - Instructional level in reading, mathematics, and science Mastery Objectives
 - Aligned with grade-level Maryland Content Standards
 - Based on Alternate Academic Achievement Standards
- **6-month testing window**
- **Included in teacher accountability system**

Student Learning Objectives (SLO)

An SLO is...

Based on the
most current
student data

Aligned to
current
curriculum
standards

*...an
instructional
goal... for
specific
students...for
a specific time
interval*

Focused on the
most valuable
learning

Specific and
measurable

UDL as a Framework for Supporting Learning and Improving Achievement for All Learners In Maryland

Students with disabilities are considered in all decision making.

Maryland is committed to closing achievement gaps and maximizing learning for all students.

Maryland legislation establishes a Task Force to explore incorporation of UDL in Maryland's education systems.

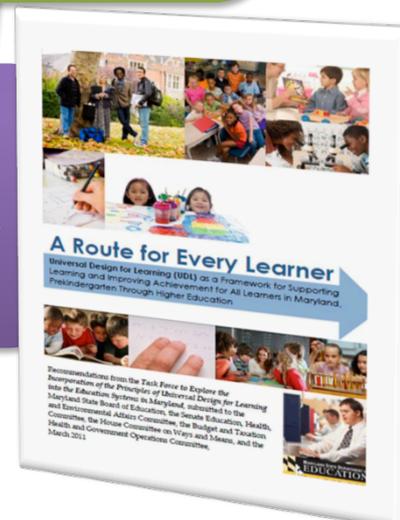
—Senate Bill 467/House Bill 59

Maryland is implementing recommendations and designing resources to support UDL implementation Statewide.

The Task Force makes recommendations in the report, "*A Route for Every Learner*."

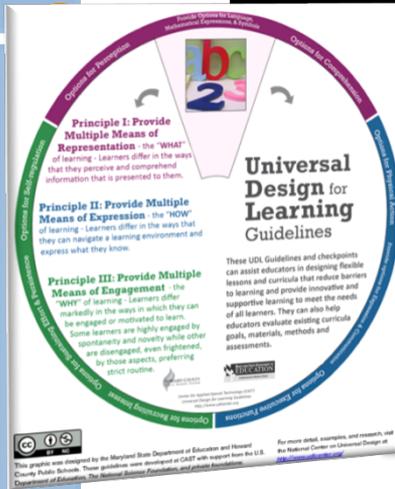
State regulation is proposed to ensure implementation of UDL guidelines and principles.

—Code of Maryland Regulation (COMAR 13A.03.06)



Maryland UDL Resources

For Families, Teachers, and Service Providers



Professional Development

State-of-the-Art Web-Based Resources



Educator Effectiveness Academies

<http://www.udl-rttt.mdonlinegrants.org/>

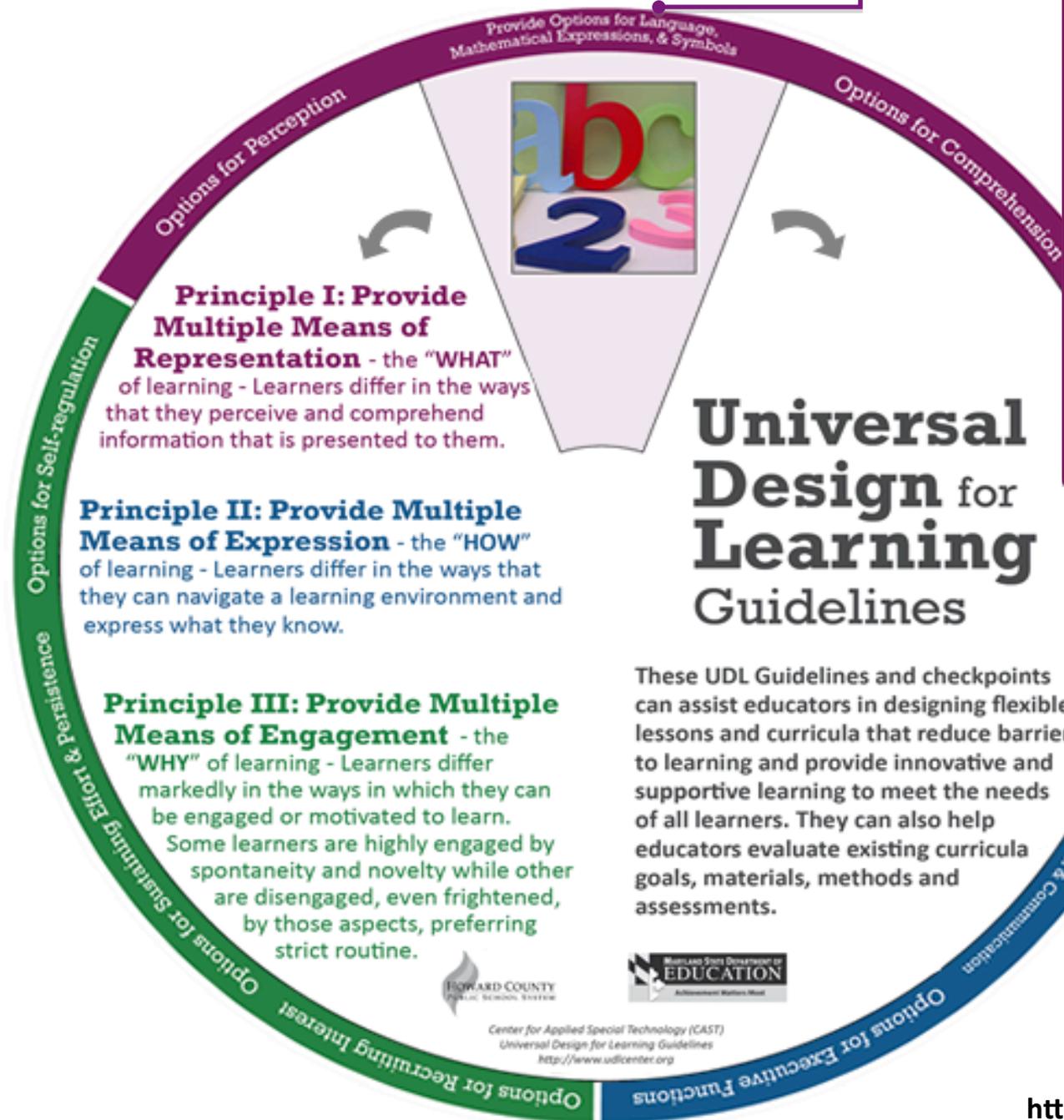
iPhone App

UDLinks



MARYLAND
LEARNING LINKS

<http://marylandlearninglinks.org/>



Options for Language & Symbols

- Pre-teach vocabulary & symbols, especially in ways that promote connection to the learners experience and prior knowledge
- Highlight how complex terms, expressions, or equations are composed of simpler words or symbols
- Clarify unfamiliar syntax (in language or in math formulas) or underlying structure (in diagrams, graphs, illustrations, extended expositions or narratives)
- Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, & symbols
- Present key concepts in one form of symbolic representation (e.g. an expository text or a math equation) with an alternative form (e.g. an illustration, dance/movement, diagram, table, model, video, comic strip, storyboard, photograph, animation, physical or virtual manipulative)

Sample Resources

- [Define Vocabulary and Symbols](#)
- [Clarify Syntax and Structure](#)
- [Decoding Text](#)
- [Additional Resources and Information](#)

Maryland UDL Resources:
UDL Interactive Activity

Note: The purpose of this activity is to provide practice in applying UDL principles when developing goals, instructional delivery methods, materials selection, and assessment. The examples are not crafted to represent exemplar lesson development, but as a means to practice using UDL principles in each area. Clearly, when planning lessons, each of these elements, (goals, methods, materials and assessment) are integrated and not planned in isolation.

Choose a classroom to begin.



FOURTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES



...would have included the learning methods of reading, writing and most likely listening to a lecture and taking notes. And as you now know, this would have created substantial learning barriers for many of the students in this group:



NEXT



SANDRA

Reading at 6th grade level

Loves History

Mild organizational problems



SUSAN

Loves animals

Reading at 2nd grade level

Poor vocabulary and background knowledge



SIMON

Reading and written expression are at 1st grade level

Strong social skills

Huge music fan



JAMAL

Physical/kinesthetic learner

Displays "attention seeking behaviours"

Has ADHD

Poor auditory processing and organizational skills

FOURTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES



This is cool. I finally understand what I'm reading.



SUSAN

Loves animals

Reading at 2nd grade level

Poor vocabulary and background knowledge

Which learning material would you add for Susan?

A. Digital texts with spell-check and scaffolding for new vocabulary

B. A software program for advanced elementary school writers

C. Both of the above



SANDRA

Reading at 6th grade level

Loves History

Mild organizational problems



SIMON

Reading and written expression are at 1st grade level

Strong social skills

Huge music fan



JAMAL

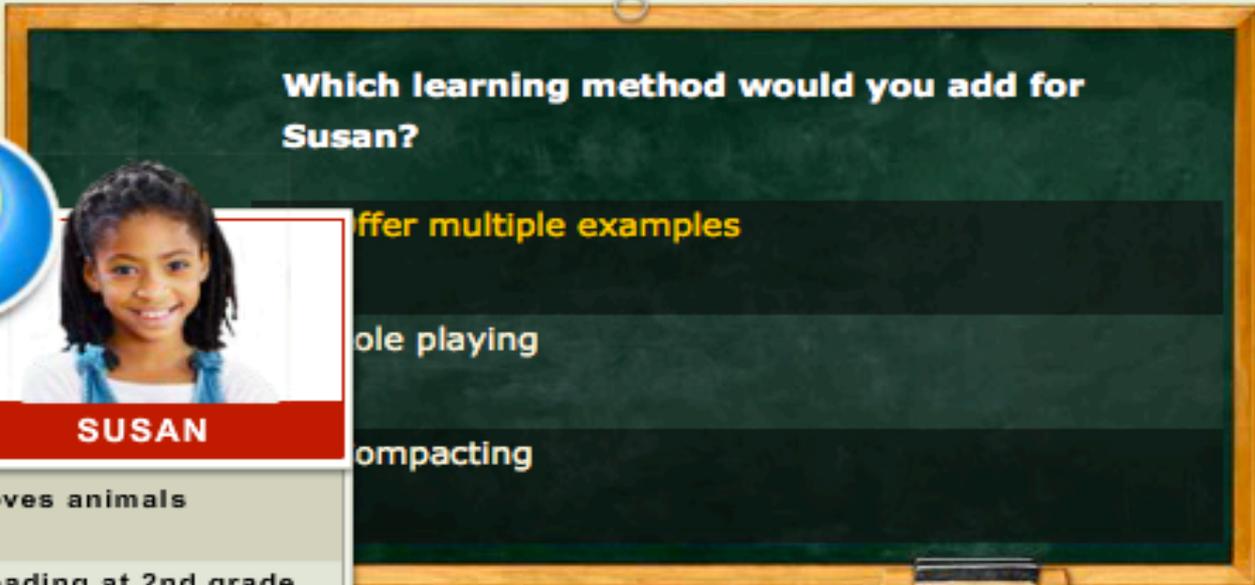
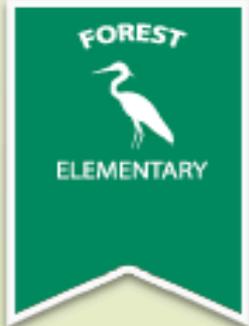
Physical/kinesthetic learner

Displays "attention seeking behaviours"

Has ADHD

Poor auditory processing and organizational skills

FOURTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES



SUSAN

Loves animals

Reading at 2nd grade level

Poor vocabulary and background knowledge



SANDRA

Reading at 6th grade level

Loves History

Mild organizational problems

SIMON

Reading and written expression are at 1st grade level

Strong social skills

Huge music fan

JAMAL

Physical/kinesthetic learner

Displays "attention seeking behaviours"

Has ADHD

Poor auditory processing and organizational skills



FIFTH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES



I could have written a regular report, but I love history and the idea of making a scrapbook sounds good to me.



SANDRA

Reading at 6th grade level
Loves History
Mild organizational problems

Which means of assessment would you add for Sandra?

A. Invent a board game

B. Make a scrapbook

C. Both of the above



SUSAN

Loves animals
Reading at 2nd grade level
Poor vocabulary and background knowledge



SIMON

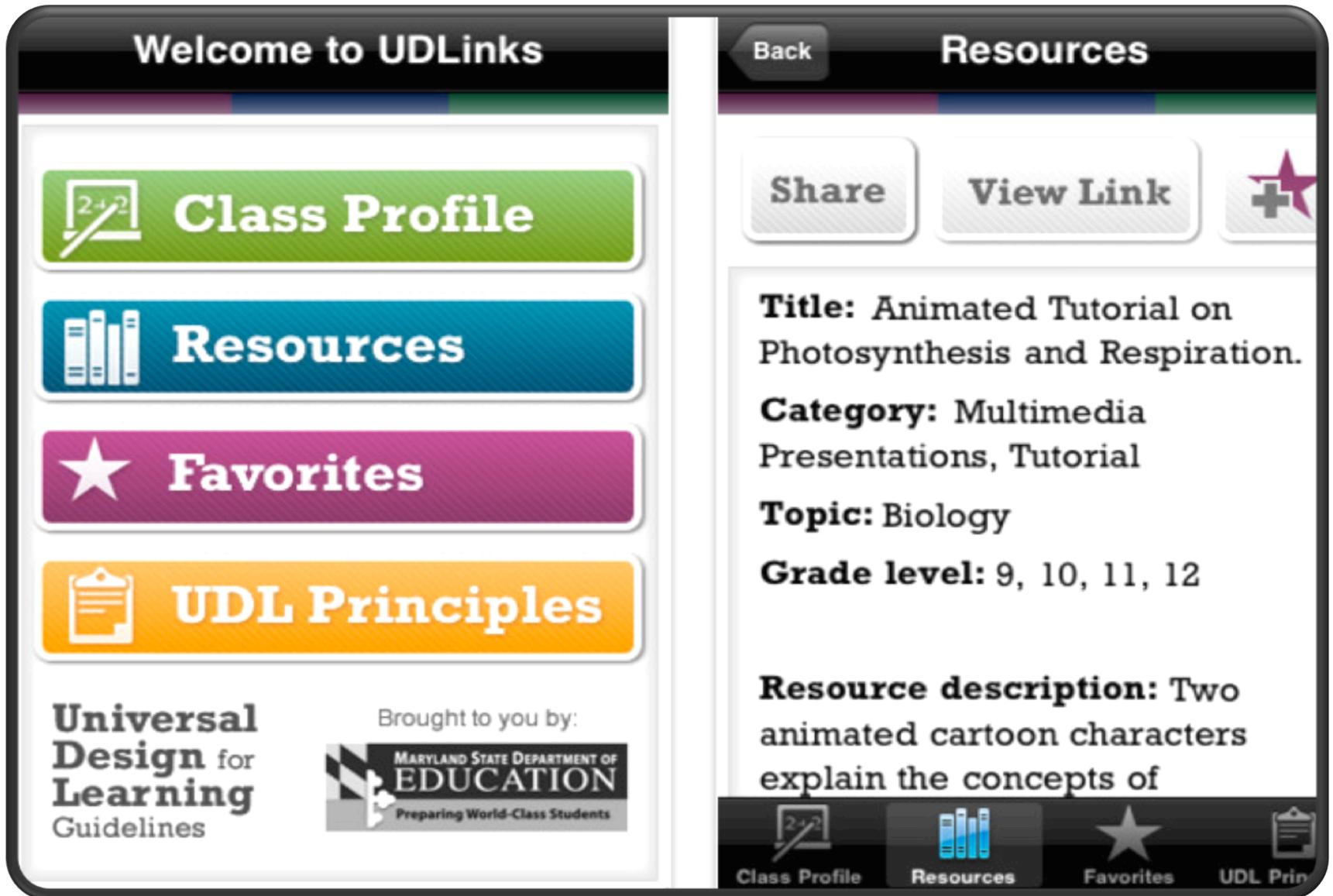
Reading and written expression are at 1st grade level
Strong social skills
Huge music fan



JAMAL

Physical/kinesthetic learner
Displays "attention seeking behaviours"
Has ADHD
Poor auditory processing and organizational skills





- ◆ Understanding Disabilities
- ◆ **Universal Design for Learning**
 - Origins of UDL
 - Theory Behind UDL
 - UDL in Your Classroom
 - Links to Learn More
 - UDL Interactive Activity
- ◆ Assistive Technology
- ◆ Adapted Physical Education
- ◆ Co-Teaching
- ◆ English Language Learning
- ◆ Transition: Life After School
- ◆ Differentiated Instruction
- ◆ PBIS
- ◆ Response to Intervention
- ◆ Blog
- ◆ Discussions
- ◆ Archives (Teaching All Students)
- ◆ Teaching All Students Groups

Teaching All Students • Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

Today's diverse classrooms are comprised of students with a wide range of abilities, learning preferences and interests. Educators are responsible for providing high quality instruction that enables all students to achieve high standards with curricula that may present unintentional roadblocks to instruction.

So the question is this: **How do you build and implement a curriculum that helps all students learn and achieve to the best of their abilities?**



For many educators, applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles is viewed as a philosophical approach for designing curriculum, shaping instruction, selecting instructional materials/technology, and developing assessments that provide greater access to learning for all students. Designing curriculum and instruction for diverse learners using the

principles of UDL at the outset enhances the classroom environment and requires less retrofitting and adaptation by classroom teachers.

What is UDL and how can it help you?

UDL was first developed in the 1990s by researchers at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST). They define UDL as:

"...a research-based framework for designing curricula – that is educational goals, methods, materials and assessments – that enable all individuals to gain knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for learning. This is accomplished by simultaneously providing rich supports for learning and reducing barriers to the curriculum, while maintaining high achievement standards for all students."



In this overview, we will take a look at the research and theory behind UDL, and how UDL principles serve as a framework for designing educational environments that enable all learners to gain knowledge, skills and enthusiasm for learning. UDL does not suggest a single solution for everyone, instead it encourages multiple approaches to meet the



Try our **UDL Activity** to learn how to plan for all of your students.

UDL: Planning for All Learners (PAL) Toolkit

This resource from the [Center for Applied Special Technology \(CAST\)](#) outlines important steps for planning and developing curricula that align with Universal Design for Learning. Organized in the form of a toolkit, the [Planning for All Learners \(PAL\)](#) resources provide educators with information and documents for creating lessons that promote access, participation, and progress in the general education curriculum for all learners. Begin with the [Overview](#) to learn more.



UDL for Dinner

Imagine that you are preparing dinner for a large gathering of friends and family. You decide

All Maryland UDL Resources are available on the Maryland Learning Links website.

MarylandLearningLinks.org

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Visit us on YouTube

Read our Blogs

Join our Discussions

Next Steps

- Include special education representatives in the development and evaluation of teacher evaluation implementation.
- Monitor implementation to develop guidance.
- Conduct research to validate state and district efforts.

TQ Center Resources (<http://www.tqsource.org/>)

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FOR TEACHER QUALITY**

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The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) is a national resource for:

- [Regional Comprehensive Centers](#)
- State Departments of Education
- And other education stakeholders

Goals:

- Improve the quality of teaching, especially in high-poverty, low-performing, and hard-to-staff schools.
- Provide guidance to ensure that highly qualified teachers are serving students with special needs.

In the Spotlight

[Aligning Teacher Evaluation with Professional Learning](#)

Thirty-three states have recently passed teacher evaluation legislation aimed at improving teaching effectiveness and student learning in schools. The TQ Center is working to ensure teacher evaluation

Latest TQ Center Resources

New! [Infographic for Aligning Teacher Evaluation with Professional Learning](#)

New! [Generating Teaching Effectiveness: The Role of Job-Embedded Professional Development](#)

- **STEP Database**

<http://resource.tqsource.org/stateevaldb/>

- **Guide to Evaluation Products**

<http://resource.tqsource.org/GEP/>

- **Online Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems**

<http://www.tqsource.org/practicalGuide/>

- **Aligning Teacher Evaluation with Professional Learning**

<http://www.tqsource.org/alignEvalProfLearning.php>

More to Follow

- **Webinar 3: Measuring the Growth of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment**
Date: August 9, 2012 Time: 1 to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time
- Recorded webinars uploaded to:
<http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/osep2012/>
- **Forum on Evaluating Educator Effectiveness: Critical Considerations for Including Students With Disabilities, CCSSO National Conference on Student Assessment Pre-session**
Tuesday, June 26, 2012, 1– 5 p.m.



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FOR **TEACHER QUALITY**

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