

# Universal Design for Learning: Enhancing Engagement and Equity



April 4, 2017

# Presentation Objectives

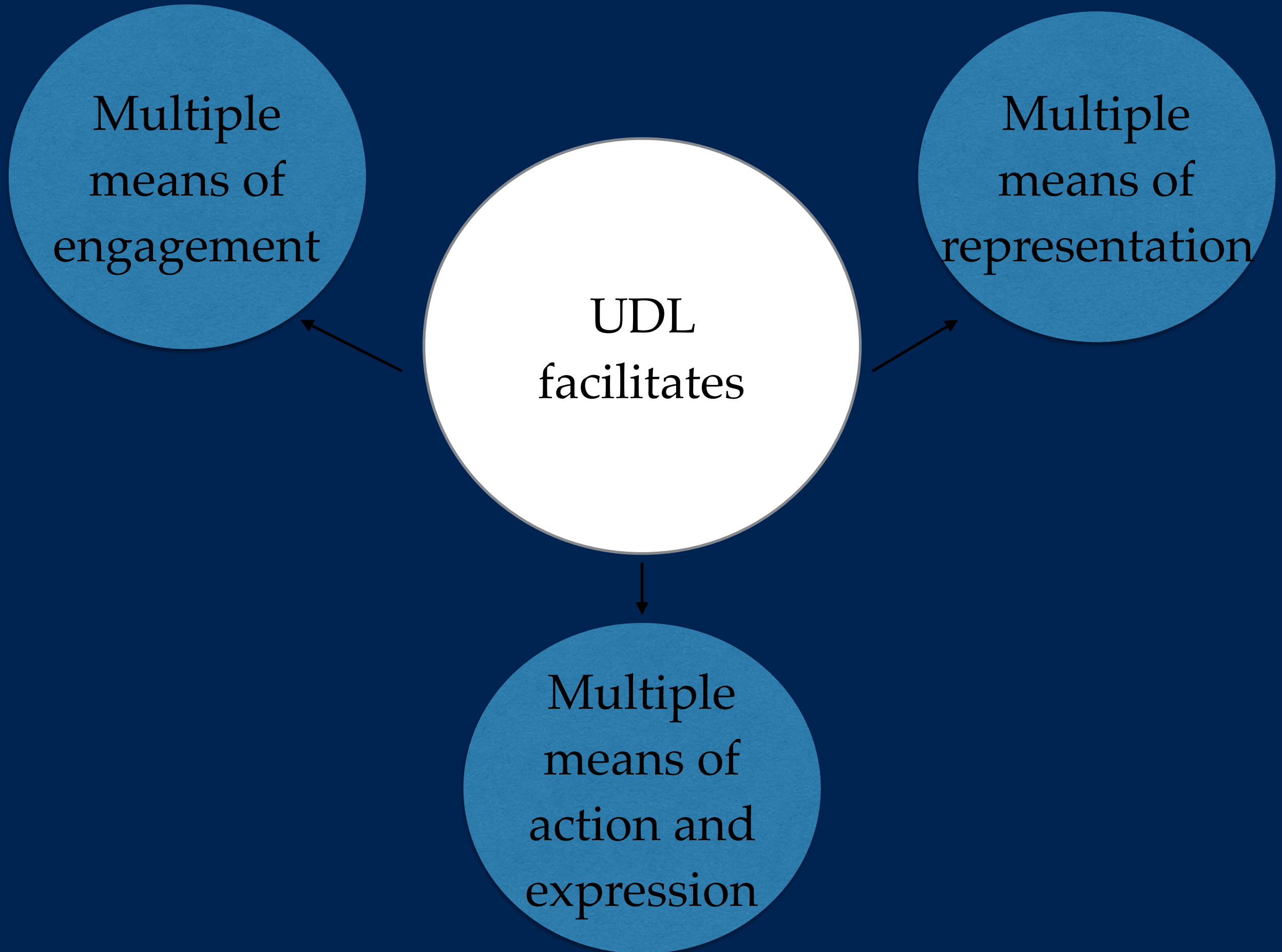
- Share key elements of Universal Design for Learning
- Distinguish differences between Universal Design and Differentiation
- Review essential considerations for effective implementation
- Highlight alignment with Strategic Plan, Vision for Equity, and Equity Committee goal
- Identify assets and opportunities
- Review next steps



# Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

*“The goal of education in the 21st century is not simply the mastery of content knowledge or use of new technologies. It is the mastery of the learning process. Education should turn novice learners into expert learners, who know how to learn strategically, and who, in their own highly individual and flexible ways, are well prepared for a life-time of learning. Universal Design for Learning helps educators meet this goal by providing a framework for understanding how to create curricula that meets the needs of all learners from the start.”*

\*Source: National Center of Universal Design for Learning website



# Universal Design for Learning: Key Elements

- Acknowledges that each student has his or her own unique learning profile
- Provides framework for increasing access to high quality learning goals for all students from the beginning
- Focuses on identifying and removing existing barriers to learning
- Emphasizes the development of student voice and choice
- Facilitates creativity and independence

# Universal Design for Learning: The Three Primary Brain Networks

<b>Affective Networks: The <i>Why</i> of Learning</b>	<b>Recognition Networks: The <i>What</i> of Learning</b>	<b>Strategic Networks: The <i>How</i> of Learning</b>
<p>How learners get engaged and stay motivated. How they are challenged, excited, or interested.</p> <p>These are affective dimensions.</p>	<p>How we gather facts and categorize what we see, hear, and read.</p> <p>Identifying letters, words, or authors style are recognition tasks</p>	<p>Planning and performing tasks. How we organize and express our ideas.</p> <p>Writing an essay or solving a math problem are strategic tasks.</p>
<p>Stimulate interest and motivation for learning.</p>	<p>Present information and content in different ways.</p>	<p>Differentiate the ways that students can express what they know.</p>

\*Source: *Differentiated Instruction and Implications for UDL Implementation, Effective Classroom Practices Report (2014)*

# Differentiation: A Teacher's Response to Learner's Needs

Guided by a Growth Mindset	Teachers Can Differentiate Through	According to Students'
Supportive learning environment	Content	Readiness
Quality Curriculum	Process	Interest
Teaching Up	Product	Learning profile
Flexible Grouping	Affect	
Respectful Tasks	Learning Environment	
Continual assessment to inform teaching & learning		

\*Source: *Differentiated Instruction and Implications for UDL Implementation, Effective Classroom Practices Report (2014)*

# Essential Considerations for Effective Implementation

- Why Universal Design for Learning? Why now?
- Who will experience UDL and when?
- How will the old and new paradigms coexist?
- What supports will teachers need?
- Who will help teachers retool?
- What is the school leader's role?
- Where are parents in the change process?
- What aspects of the educational environment will have to change?

\*Source: Carol Ann Tomlinson, "Let's Celebrate Personalization, but Not Too Fast." (2017)



# District 90 Strategic Plan Core Values and Commitments

*“We believe in equity and inclusivity for all. We will ensure that every student feels empowered to achieve to his or her full potential, commit to provide equitable opportunities for all learners, grow an inclusive school community, and demonstrate we value diversity.”*

*\*River Forest Public Schools, District 90 Strategic Plan, 2015-2020*

## District 90 Equity Statement

*“To ensure that every student feels empowered to achieve to his or her full potential, we commit to provide equitable opportunities for all learners, grow an inclusive school community, and demonstrate that we value diversity.”*

## D90 Equity Committee Goal 'A'

*“The Board of Education authorizes District 90 administration to investigate and pursue the implementation of instructional models and strategies that have predictive success for narrowing the achievement gap, including (but not limited to) Universal Design for Learning (UDL), project/problem based learning, and co-teaching. These investigations should also include potential initiatives intended to help support strong early childhood foundations.”*

\*Equity Committee Recommendations for D90 BOE Consideration, April 18, 2016

## D90 Foundational Assets

- Developed District-level commitments and goals to support study of UDL
- Conducted district-wide professional development with The National Equity Project
- Adopted curriculum review cycle to engage all content areas in review of curriculum, instruction, and materials
- Utilized rubric that incorporated equity criteria for math materials adoption
- Initiated co-teaching in some classrooms across buildings



# D90 Teaching and Learning Opportunities

- Unify initiatives currently operating in isolation
- Identify and remove existing barriers to learning
- Enhance current levels of engagement through promotion of student voice and choice
- Engage in district-wide collaborative learning to develop common language and understanding of UDL practices
- Continue to adopt curricular resources that embed multiple entry points and perspectives
- Identify areas to incorporate performance tasks or project-based learning

# Looking Ahead: Next Steps (2017-18)

- Establish District committee dedicated to Universal Design for Learning (UDL)
- Engage in study of UDL research and best instructional practices
- Develop goals and outcomes for UDL
- Empower teacher leadership team to facilitate building-level professional development
- Identify professional development needs

# Q & A

