

BC Universal Design for Learning Project 2009 - 2010

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL)?

Universal Design for Learning is the design of instructional materials and methods that makes curriculum accessible to individuals with wide differences in their abilities. The UDL approach considers how different student abilities and learning styles will interact with curriculum elements such as printed text and seeks to remove curriculum barriers with appropriate supports. The inherent flexibility of digital technologies greatly expands the teacher's ability to address diverse learning needs within the UDL framework.

WHAT IS THE BC UDL PROJECT?

The BC Universal Design for Learning (BC UDL) Project is a Ministry of Education funded initiative to assist pilot school districts in implementing principles of UDL. Schools in 7 BC districts will be selected to participate as UDL "model schools" during 2009 – 2010. UDL teams in the project will receive release time, technology, and training in UDL principles. Team members will develop lessons and curriculum resources and learn to implement UDL strategies and instructional technologies to support the needs of students with and without disabilities. The project will also provide online resources designed to help all BC school districts learn about UDL principles and best practices. BC educators will be able to access the BC UDL Learning Object Repository and download universally-designed lessons plans and classroom resources.

WHAT ARE THE PROJECT GOALS FOR 2009 - 2010?

This project is designed to accomplish the following goals:

- Work in partnership with BC school districts to promote the implementation of UDL in BC classrooms
- Build and support UDL infrastructure for 7 additional BC schools
- Focus on UDL instruction and resources for Language Arts, Social Studies, Sciences, and Math for students in grades 4 through 12
- Create opportunities for teams previously involved in the project to act as mentors for new teams
- Continue to develop online collection of UDL training materials, lesson plans and curriculum resources
- Collect information on project impact on instruction, student engagement and student achievement

WHAT RESOURCES AND SUPPORT WILL BE PROVIDED FOR PARTICIPATING TEAMS?

- Training – Teams will receive face-to-face and online training on UDL principles and practices and strategies for technology use throughout the year.
- Support – The project leader will provide ongoing support to teams throughout the year. Team leaders from the first two years of the project will also act as mentors for new teams.
- Technology – Based on individual team requirements, we will provide instructional technology for teachers; for example, computers, projection systems, Smart Boards, software.
- Resources – Teams will have access to the online collection of UDL lesson plans / curriculum activities and current professional readings.
- Release time – Release time will be funded for team training, lesson and resource development activities, and regularly scheduled online meetings for team leaders.
- Travel – Team leaders will receive funding to travel to orientation sessions.

WHAT WILL DISTRICTS AND SCHOOLS BE ASKED TO PROVIDE?

School districts and SET-BC will work in partnership to provide resources and support for participating teams. Schools in the project will identify four teachers, including one team leader, and an IT support person to take part in project activities throughout the school year. Schools applying for this project may want to provide additional release time for teams, classroom computers and software for students, or other resources. Team support from school and district administrations, as well as IT departments, is very important.

WHAT ARE THE BC UDL PROJECT TIMELINES?

- March 23, 2009: Project announcement and application sent to special education administrators
- April 30: Application deadline
- May 15: Notification of teams accepted into the project
- June 11 - 12: Orientation in Vancouver for school team leaders
- June 15 - 26: Districts submit technology request for funding
- September: Districts purchase and install hardware, software and related media tools
- September 2009 - June 2010: Teams receive online and onsite support and training to collaborate, develop, and implement UDL strategies. Teams contribute lessons to the Learning Object Repository.

HOW WILL SCHOOL DISTRICTS APPLY?

BC schools interested in implementing Universal Design for Learning principles and practices are invited to apply using the project application forms provided to special education administrators. A sample of the form is available on the project webpage at www.setbc.org/setinfo/bcudl.

Only 1 application per school district can be submitted. The application must be signed and submitted by a district administrator. Priority will be given to districts that have not yet participated in the project.

HOW WILL TEAMS BE SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE?

When selecting teams for this project, we will consider:

- Geographical representation
- Challenges and opportunities created by the diversity of students in your school
- School district activities and initiatives, especially those related to UDL or differentiating instruction
- Team, IT, and district involvement in the application process and commitment to the project
- School district contributions to the project partnership and long-term commitment to UDL

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT?

- Detailed information about the BC UDL project is available at www.setbc.org/setinfo/BCUDL.
- Attend an informal online meeting to ask questions about the project and application process. These meetings are scheduled for both April 9th and 16th from 12:00 -1:00 or 3:30 - 4:30 (PST).
- Please email Mallory Burton (see below) to register for the online sessions.

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Contact Mallory Burton, BC UDL Project Leader.

- Email at mburton@setbc.org
- Phone 250-624-6621 (office) or 778-868-8445 (cell)