Final Report
Universal Design for Learning Year 3

Project Description:
This project was important to us because we have spent 3 years exploring and learning about Universal Design for Learning. We have been fortunate enough to have the support through our administration and previous Pdigs to learn and implement various UDL practices within our own teaching and we have seen first hand how it can help our students. In this next step we wanted to re-invest what we had learned into our school and into other schools within our Board. As well we created a variety of resource tools/lists to help our staff take their own first steps towards making their teaching practices more accessible to all students.

One of the greatest challenges we faced this year was the varying readiness of the staff. This included the Pedagogical Coordinators within our school, therefore changing our plans to work with small departments.

A second challenge we faced was in working with our resource teachers. This we feel was due to the fact that many of our resource teachers are only assigned to the resource role for a few blocks per cycle. The plan would have worked more fluidly with more full time resource teachers.

A third challenge we faced was with our goal to co-planning. We think most of the department were not ready because they did not establish their department essential learnings. This year several of our large departments did move forward as teams establishing their departments essentials and they will be in a better position to work with planning within the UDL framework having these essentials established.

Pour terminer, nous avons vécu plusieurs succès lors de ce Pdig. Nous avons pu agrandir l'équipe et plusieurs enseignants sont de plus en plus ouvert à l'approche UDL. Nous avons également créer différentes ressources pour aider les enseignants à approfondir leurs connaissances face à UDL.
We created a suggested reading list from titles that we have found helpful and motivating. The survey we created to assess the readiness levels of our colleagues was very helpful.

Journal entries:

Day 1: In our first meeting we reviewed the goals for the upcoming year. Ideas were looked at on how to present the next step of UDL to the staff. It was decided that we should take note of where staff feel they are in the UDL process.

We created a questionnaire with the aim of guiding our staff training based on their perceived needs. The questionnaire was sent out to staff with the plan to review the results at our next meeting.

Day 2: We analyzed the feedback from the UDL questionnaire sent to staff. We identified key areas where our staff felt they needed support and decided how to unfold future training to support these needs.

Day 3: We worked on our presentation/training and also took time to discuss several titles that the team was reading/exploring on UDL. We realized that we needed to pull this list of titles together and share them with the staff.

Day 4: We continued work on our presentation/training. We also took time to review the identified needs of the staff and outlined a plan for the next two years of UDL implementation.

Day 5: Much discussion on this day surrounded the use of a common vocabulary within our staff regarding goals, targets and essentials.   We created a "take-away" for teachers in the form of a bookmark providing them with a quick reference on ideas to bring down the barriers and the common vocabulary decided upon by the team.

Day 6: Last minute changes made to our presentation so that we included an explanation on how RTI and UDL worked in sync with each other and they are not two separate initiatives. This resulted from an administrative decision to adapt our current schedule to allow it to embrace and work with the RTI model for next school year.

Project Goals

Goal of the Pdig for this year was to bring UDL to as many of our teachers as possible as a viable working option allowing them to reduce the barriers and have more students meet with success.

As a result of our survey we were able to assess that our staff's needs were quite diverse. Although some of our colleagues were ready to take their UDL a step further, many were still at the stage where their focus was on making changes to the physical environment of their classroom. These realizations resulted in a change to our proposed plan where we would focus our training on a full staff model, rather than the smaller departments. Our hope was to get more people moved forward in their understanding of UDL and it's importance, as well as give them some concrete, simple ideas that they could try in their classrooms. The

goal here was to increase staff readiness in order to take the next steps towards the systemic changes we hope to make at the end of our 5 year plan.

Project Outcomes

Cette année, nous avons été capable de démontrer comment UDL pouvait s'intégrer à notre système scolaire. Nous avons su démontrer par ce PDIG comment plusieurs approches éducatives étaient interreliées. Nous savons maintenant que UDL s'intègre parfaitement à l'approche RTI. Nous avons également créer un «Bookmark» pour les enseignants de notre école pour les aider à intégrer les différentes pratiques de UDL.

Finally, we put together a list of suggested readings for our staff based on books that we as a team explored.

Thanks to our staff survey, we were able to quickly identify candidates for a training session at McGill University for UDL. It has also helped us figure out where our next steps need to go in order to move the systemic changes forward.

Pour terminer, nous avons pu collaborer avec deux autres écoles primaires de notre commission scolaire. Cette collaboration nous aidera à diversifier nos ressources et établir une connection entre le primaire et le secondaire en lien avec UDL. Nous espérons l'année prochaine collaborer étroitement avec ces deux écoles.

Reinvestment

Notre équipe à continuer encore cette année de partager avec le personnel enseignant différents stratégies pouvant être mise en place dans leur salle de classe. Nous croyons que le travail accompli cette année sera bénéfique pour notre commission scolaire. Cette dernière désire implanter UDL dans ses différentes écoles. Elle priorise dans son «Success Plan» cette nouvelle approche. Nous espérons sous peu faire une rencontre avec les différentes écoles qui ont développé UDL et notre commission scolaire pour établir nos objectifs à court et moyen terme vis-à-vis cette approche. Nous avons également eu une demande du Collège Champlain de Lennoxville pour nous rencontrer. Ces derniers désirent en apprendre plus vis-à-vis l'approche UDL.

<u>Final Report</u>

Our project, Universal Design for Learning is headed into its third year. The team has learned so much about what UDL is and how it can and should work in a classroom so that Learning can be accessible for all. After two years we are comfortable and our own teaching methods are starting to change. We wanted to bring this change out of our own classrooms and into as much of the school and Board as we could. It's exciting because of the wide variety of learners we have at our school. With over 400 active IEP's within our school it is imperative that we worked to find ways to make learning accessible for all in a sustainable way. This way no matter which subject or which teacher a student is working with, the learning will be accessible to that student.

The project moved the pedagogical practices of our staff forward in the UDL framework, and allowed us to collaborate between elementary and secondary schools.