



# UDL Playbook for School & District Leaders

## **Book Club Guide**

Katie Novak & Michael Woodlock

# USING THIS GUIDE

As you facilitate your book club, remember to incorporate the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). For example, consider offering opportunities for synchronous or asynchronous sessions, in person and/or virtual sessions, and options for participants to respond to prompts using multiple means of action and expression. Consider setting up a free course in a platform like Moodle or Canvas so you can utilize discussion boards where participants can post reflections in written form, audio, and video. Alternatively, you can use social media platforms like Twitter, Instagram or Facebook to host a book club chat (don't forget to create a hashtag or use #UDLPlaybook for everyone to use and follow!). Although virtual is great for some, you may also want to have the option for participants to attend a traditional book club where small groups meet in person.

“As leaders in education, we have the power and the privilege to create a vision and strategy for this work.”

## TIPS FOR FACILITATING A SUCCESSFUL BOOK CLUB



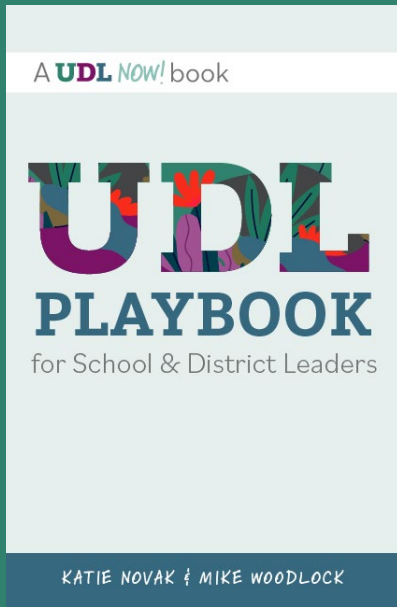
Have a designated point person for each book club option (i.e., the social media maven, the check-in person for in-person sessions, and the course manager if setting up a virtual course). This person can check in with the teams to monitor progress, provide feedback, and offer motivation to keep on reading!



Regardless of the pathways the participants select, consider offering synchronous online sessions periodically where participants can share their thoughts, questions, and “aha!” moments as they read the book.



When participants are posting online, be sure to keep the conversation going - ask questions, share resources, make comments, and provide feedback.



# Book Club Modules

This book club guide for *UDL Playbook for School & District Administrator* by Katie Novak and Michael Woodlock is broken into “modules” which correspond to each chapter in the book. You can determine the pace of getting through the modules based on the preferences of the group. In each module, participants read the associated chapter, consider the reflection questions at the end of the chapter, and/or choose one of the resources to further explore and put learning into practice.

## OPTIONS FOR PARTICIPATING



Host an online book group on Canvas, Moodle, or other free tool.



Select 2-3 online tools or social media sites for people to respond to weekly prompts using a hashtag.



Offer opportunities for teams to meet in person and have discussions and then email notes.



# Chapter 1

## Preparing to be an Expert Learner

In order to better manage all of the issues we face as school leaders, we all need to be expert learners. But, what does it mean to be an expert learner who is also a school leader?

### Expert Learning Self-Reflection Questions for Leaders

- What are my strengths and weaknesses as a leader?
- What is the optimal setting in which I can learn to improve my practice?
- Which tools amplify my abilities and support my areas of weakness?
- How do I best learn from colleagues?
- How can I support myself when I feel anxious about an upcoming challenge?
- How can I be open to unlearning mistaken or outdated understandings and building new ones?
- How can I learn from my mistakes?"

### Self-Reflection Questions

1. What format of collecting feedback are you most comfortable with? Do you think it is important to go outside of your comfort zone when soliciting feedback? Why or why not?
2. How can feedback help you to better identify your perceived strengths and weaknesses?
3. What tools could you use to ensure that you are providing multiple options for your staff to give feedback in the way in which they are most comfortable?

### Explore Your Jaggedness

Encourage your group to take a moment and consider how they can consistently ask these questions in their practice, as they think about the task of changing the outcomes of all learners despite the very real and very significant barriers that must be addressed. Feel free to print copies of this page to hand out or access it in Google Docs here (<https://bit.ly/3k9CTDu> - you'll need to "make a copy" to proceed) for people to fill it out on their computer.

Teamwork and collaboration	Low	Average	High
<b>Self-Awareness</b>			
Emotional self-awareness			
Accurate self-awareness			
Self-confidence			
<b>Self-Management</b>			
Emotional self-control			
Transparency			
Adaptability			
Achievement			
Initiative			
<b>Social Awareness</b>			
Empathy			
Organizational awareness			
Service			
<b>Relationship Management</b>			
Inspirational leadership			
Influence			
Developing others			
Change catalyst			
Conflict management			
Building bonds			
Teamwork and collaboration			

# Chapter 2

## The Executive Function of Leadership

Universally designed leadership is about focusing on the larger goal to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn at high levels.



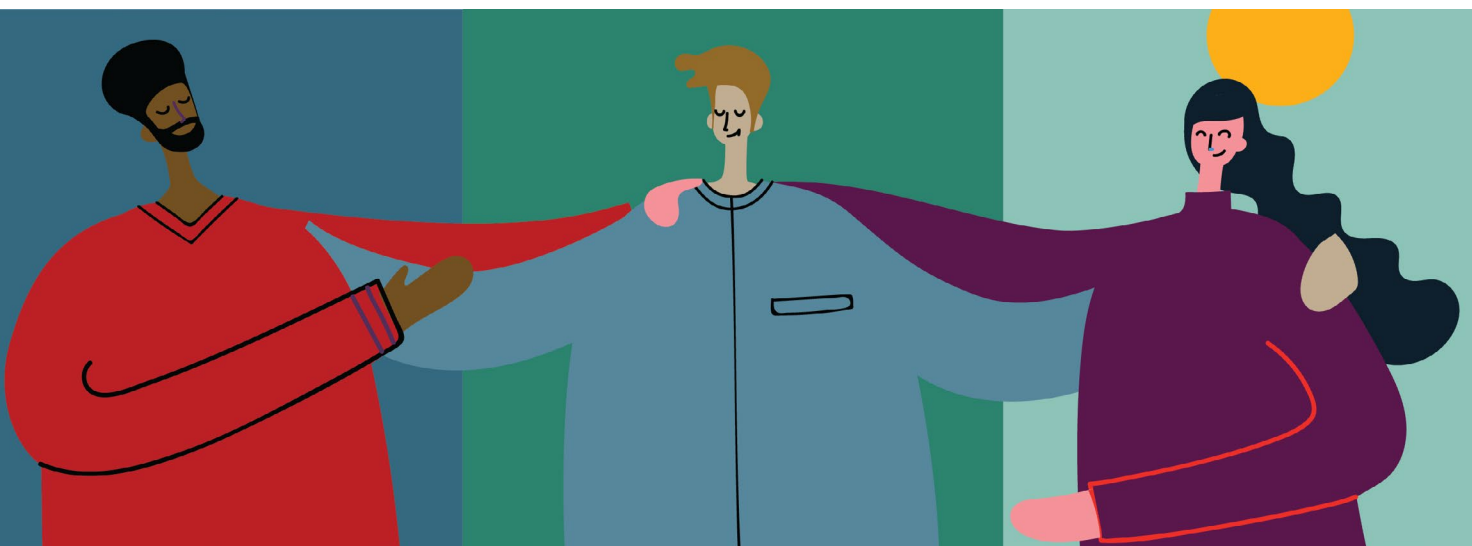
*Adaptive challenges require tenacity.*

### Self-Reflection Questions

1. How can you make your wildly important goals so clear that daily obstacles and moments of pure absurdity cannot alter your direction significantly?
2. As you consider your learning environments, what are the technical and adaptive barriers that you are currently focused on addressing through your leadership?

### Discussion Question

- Review the Case Study Discussion on page 31. Take time to think about how you would handle this situation, balancing both the importance of technical and adaptive challenges and expert learning. Discuss.



# Chapter 3

## Creating a UDL Foundation

Developing a culture of expert learners needs to start with you as a leader. You have to focus on instructional leadership, relationships, and understanding that UDL is a framework that requires you to shift your beliefs and invest your time and energy differently.

### Pause and Think

Now that you have learned more about the importance of being an expert learner and the power and promise of adaptive change, what core values would you love to embed in your school community? Take a moment and add to our list. What values are necessary to create a system that is universally designed?



*If you are going to lead everyone in a new direction, they have to know where they are going.*

### Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. Why is it critical to understand UDL as a conceptual framework as opposed to a list of strategies?
2. Do I truly believe in the power of variability, that all students can access grade-level rigor, and that all students can become expert learners? If not, how can I expect my staff to align their practices to the framework?
3. As a school, do we have core values? If so, do they align to the core principles of UDL? If not, how can we begin the process of revising them?
4. Recognizing that UDL provides a foundation for a multi-tiered system, how can I ensure that all students in our system get what they need, when they need it, while also having opportunities to become expert learners?

# Chapter 4

## Modeling UDL Through Professional Learning

If your goal is to move your school and district toward UDL, you will want to model it through your leadership practice. Model, model, model.



*When we embrace UDL in our leadership practice, we embrace educators as leaders, which is also a great way to create an empowering school culture.*



### Activity

Looking at the Instructional Rounds Protocol on page 56, have you done something like this in the past? If so, how would you change it? What would you keep the same? If not, share how this protocol will help with future PL sessions with your teams.

## Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. How skilled are you at universally designing professional development for your colleagues? If you tend to provide one-size-fits-all professional development, how can you begin to transition to UDL?
2. How can you leverage effective teaching and teachers as a form of professional development through PLCs, lesson study, instructional rounds, and so on?
3. What is your current model of professional development and how does it align to what you have learned in this chapter about how to universally design ongoing professional development?



# Chapter 5

## Educator Evaluation to Improve Teacher Efficacy

As instructional leaders, we must make it a priority to give educators mastery-oriented feedback about their teaching.



*Keep in mind that, like our students, all of our teachers learn differently.*



### Resource

- Download a printable version of the UDL Implementation Rubric here: [info.novakeducation.com/udl-implementation-rubric](http://info.novakeducation.com/udl-implementation-rubric)

## Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. What are the biggest barriers for you as an administrator when providing educator evaluation to your teachers? How can you set different expectations or develop a culture to help overcome those barriers?
2. How does your existing educator evaluation system align to the UDL Guidelines? Do you think providing a crosswalk between the Guidelines and your educator evaluation rubric would be helpful?
3. Think of a time when you provided unhelpful feedback at work or in your personal life—for example, praise for something you didn't like. After reading this chapter, how could you provide mastery-oriented feedback in that situation? How do you think your feedback would have been met?

# Chapter 6

## All Things Curriculum

How can we support our teaching staff to design curriculum that is relevant, authentic, and meaningful?



*Remember, there are numerous flexible pathways for students to build knowledge.*



### Resources

Take a look at these UDL Lesson Plan Makeovers. Included are examples of lesson plans that were in need of scaffolding and more flexibility - made over through a UDL lens.

- **Science Lessons:** [www.novakeducation.com/blog/udl-makeovers-science-lesson-plans](http://www.novakeducation.com/blog/udl-makeovers-science-lesson-plans)
- **Mathematics Lessons:** [www.novakeducation.com/blog/udl-lesson-plan-makeovers-math-lessons-math-resource-download](http://www.novakeducation.com/blog/udl-lesson-plan-makeovers-math-lessons-math-resource-download)

### Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. What is your current process of curriculum adoption? Does it align to our suggested procedures? If not, how can you begin to think differently about curriculum adoption?
2. In your opinion, what is curriculum fidelity and what are the expectations of your school or district when it comes to curriculum fidelity?
3. How can a universally designed curriculum support inclusion and success for all learners, including students with disabilities, English learners, and learners who need acceleration and enrichment?

# Chapter 7

## The Magic of Staffing

A necessary and important aspect of our job as administrators is to coach our staff members and work with them to improve.



*It is better to spend our time on the front end hiring those committed and effective educators rather than ones who will drag down the team.*



### Resource

- Check out Mike Woodlock's piece on 10 ways to support teachers in UDL: [www.novakeducation.com/blog/10-tips-for-supporting-educators-as-they-begin-their-udl-journey](http://www.novakeducation.com/blog/10-tips-for-supporting-educators-as-they-begin-their-udl-journey)

## Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. How can interview questions help you to find candidates that have the necessary knowledge, skills, and behavioral characteristics to meet the needs of all students in inclusive settings?
2. How can you improve your hiring practices to ensure you have the best candidates to implement UDL?
3. Once you hire new staff members, how can you incorporate universally designed support to ensure successful onboarding?

# Chapter 8

## A Schedule That Supports UDL Within a Multitiered System

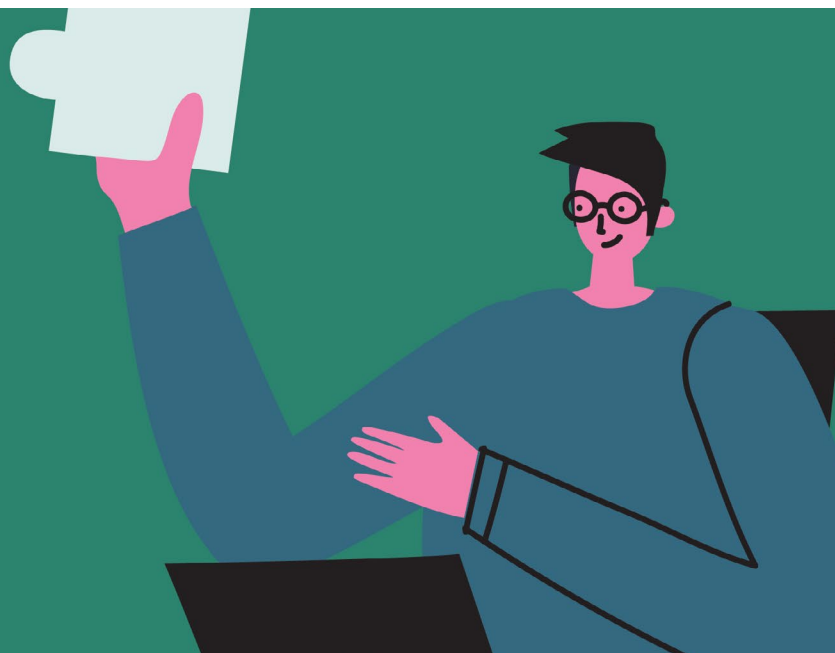
A schedule can be one of the biggest technical barriers standing in our way of meeting the needs of students and staff. But once a schedule is in a place that will allow flexibility, you will be so much more able to implement real change and adapt to the needs of all students.



*We cannot stress enough the importance of working with teachers throughout this process.*

### Discussion & Self-Reflection Questions

1. Are all of your students currently enrolled in inclusive general education classrooms that are universally designed? If they are not, what barriers prevent all students from being educated together?
2. What are the strengths and barriers in your current schedule and how can the guidance in this chapter help you to build a better schedule to meet the needs of all students?
3. How can you begin to have difficult conversations about ability grouping with your staff as the educational research begins to push more schools toward scheduling decisions like implementing open honors?



We'd Love to Hear from You!



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@katievakUDL

@GDPrincipal

Dive deeper! Explore our online course: [Coaching and Supporting UDL Implementation](#)

[Contact us](#) to speak to your group.

Remember!

You can always try again, take an alternative path, and continue to grow. There is no ceiling, no 100%, no A+ on being a leader. Expert learning and leading is a lifetime commitment and cannot flourish in a traditional system.

Take the risk. It starts with you 😊 !

