

Professional Experience

► Founder & President

Novak Educational Consulting • Groton, MA • June 2012 - present

Novak Educational Consulting is the premier organization for designing and delivering high-quality, evidence-based professional development on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), inclusive practices, equity in education, social justice, multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS), evidence-based tiered interventions, and effective leadership practices.

As Founder and President, I have provided in-person professional development, long-term implementation, and consulting in Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and multi-tiered intervention systems in 25 states and 8 countries to tens of thousands of educators and administrators and have worked with high profile clients such as the NASA Science Activation Team, the Gates Foundation, Harvard University, Los Angeles Unified School District, and WGBH.

Novak Educational Consulting runs two state-wide academies in Massachusetts for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - the Inclusive Practices Academy and the Tiered Literacy Academy. Additionally, Novak Educational Consulting has worked directly with state departments of education in Ohio, Minnesota, Hawaii, Wisconsin, Arizona, Texas, and California, to provide professional learning on UDL, inclusive practices, and the development of research-based multi-tiered systems of support. We have also worked with the US Department of Education Jobs for the Future (JFF) through the School Turnaround Learning Community and with the Office of Special Education Programs.

► Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Human Resources

Groton-Dunstable Regional School District • Groton, MA • July 2014 - June 2020

- Provided universally designed leadership and vision in the ongoing establishment of goals, planning, development, coordination, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum and instructional programs in the district. I also monitored, coordinated, and supervised all human resources operations in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations and the provisions of the district's collective bargaining agreements.
- Coordinated universally designed PD options to meet the needs of all stakeholders. Offerings included in-service training, virtual PD offerings,



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About

Internationally renowned education consultant, speaker, and author on inclusive practices, Universal Design for Learning, equity in education, and multi-tiered systems of support.



Education

Boston University
Doctorate of Education in
Curriculum and Teaching
May 2009, GPA: 3.97

Chapman University
Single Subject Credential
Program, May 2002
Master of Art in Teaching, May
2003, GPA: 3.97

University of New Hampshire
Bachelor of Science,
December 2000, GPA: 3.57

graduate courses, books clubs, and multi-part series for teachers, support staff, parents and the community.

- Communicated and collaborated effectively with all stakeholders including the students, School Committee, staff, families, and the community about educational trends, curriculum needs, and instructional programs.
- In partnership with colleagues, developed strategic plans for instructional research, management and operations, family and community engagement, and professional growth; interpreted statistical data and communicated data analysis to stakeholders to help set rigorous goals that support our district vision.
- Created and innovated solutions to challenges and opportunities by leading multi-stakeholders teams in root cause analysis to develop evidence-based strategies to increase student outcomes.
- Ensured that job descriptions for all staff were developed, remained current, and served as a basis for the evaluation of all school personnel so the district could continue to foster a culture of continual improvement and mastery-oriented feedback.
- Responded appropriately to employee grievances or problems in accordance with applicable School Committee policies, collective bargaining agreements, and/or state/federal laws and regulations.

Reading coordinator/ELL Director/Title I Director Mentoring coordinator/Teacher

Chelmsford Public Schools • Chelmsford, MA • Aug 2004 – June 2014

- As a district-wide administrator for Chelmsford Public Schools, I acted as a resource to all teachers, K-4, and all district reading specialists and ELL teachers, PK-12 in regards to educator evaluation, professional development, teaching strategies, formative and summative assessments, and current research on best practice, including Universal Design for Learning.
- Responsible for serving as primary evaluator for teachers K-12; focused on providing frequent, mastery-oriented feedback to improve teacher practice and student learning outcomes.
- Developed, implemented and monitored the budget for multiple departments.
- Implemented comprehensive home-school-community involvement program for Title I and ELL populations.
- Prepared and managed Title I and Title III applications, proposals, and reports.



Books

Unlearning, with co-author Allison Posey, published by CAST, Inc., 2020.

Innovate Inside the Box, with co-author George Couros, published by Impress, 2019.

Transforming Higher Education Through Universal Design for Learning: An international perspective, published by Routledge Publishing, London, 2018.

Let Them Thrive: A Parent's Guidebook for Helping Children Succeed in School and in Life, published by CAST, Inc., 2017.

Best-selling book on inclusive education, **Revised and Expanded Edition: UDL Now!: A Teacher's Guide to Applying Universal Design for Learning in Today's Classrooms**, published by CAST, Inc., 2016.

UDL in the Cloud: How to Design and Deliver Online Education Using Universal Design for Learning, with co-author Tom Thibodeau, published by CAST, Inc., 2016.

Universally Designed Leadership: Applying UDL to Schools and Systems, with co-author Kristan Rodriguez, published by CAST Inc., 2016.

- As mentoring coordinator, trained and recruited all district mentors and designed and oversaw teacher induction program;
- As a teacher, made high impact with student achievement, consistently averaging student growth percentages (SGP) above 70 on the MCAS with both regular education and high needs populations.

Selected Presentations

Below is a selection of presentations.

- The Washington Association of School Administrators' (WASA) project, Inclusionary Practices: Statewide Support for District Change, January, 2020
- National Council for Teachers of English (NCTE) Annual Convention, November, 2019
- State MTSS Leadership Conference, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, September, 2019
- California MTSS Professional Learning Institute, July, 2019
- 27th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Academy of Learning Disabilities, Tokyo, Japan, November, 2018
- UDL IRN National Summit Keynote, Orlando, FL, March, 2018
- California Instructional Steering Committee (CISC) Annual Conference, Spotlight Speaker, Monterey, CA, February 22, 2018
- Tier I Inclusive Academy, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Keynote Speaker, January 22, 2018
- Santa Cruz County Office of Education, December 13, 2017
- Hawaii Department of Education, Honolulu, HI, October 24-27, 2017
- American School of Dubai, United Arab Emirates, October 1-4, 2017
- CAST Annual Symposium Keynote Speaker, Boston, MA, July 31, 2017
- National MTSS Conference with SWIFT, Keynote Speaker, Orange County, CA, July 26, 2017
- AHEAD Conference, Dublin, Ireland, May 13-14, 2017
- Georgian College, Focus on Teaching Conference, Barrie, Ontario, May 4, 2017
- CEC Annual Conference, Boston, MA, April 20, 2017
- California Instructional Steering Committee (CISC), February 23, 2017
- Maine Autism Institute Professional Development Series, Portland, ME, November 10, 2016
- Rowland Foundation's Annual Statewide Conference, October 27, 2016
- Mt. St. Vincent College in Nova Scotia, October 13-14, 2016
- UDL License to Learn: A European Perspective on UDL, Ghent, Belgium, June 28-29, 2016
- "A Call for UDL in Higher Education," Center for Academic Excellence (CAE) and New England Faculty Development Consortium (NEFDC) Conference, Fairfield University, May, 2015
- "Implementation of Universal Design for Learning" keynote presentation at ULearn conference in Rotorua, New Zealand, October, 2014



Selected Articles

"Teacher Expectations, Universal Design, and Inclusion in Education" – Texas Study of Secondary Education – Fall/Winter 2019

"Models of Voice and Choice" – NAESP Principal – September/October 2019

"Road Tested / Learning Should Be a Conversation with Students" – ASCD, Education Update, December 2018

"Why UDL Matters for English Language Learners" – March 2018 – Language Magazine

"What Kids with ADHD Need to Learn: A Recipe from a Mom Who Is Also a School Superintendent" – February 2018 – ADDitude Magazine



Licensure

Massachusetts Educator's License: Certificate #: 392330

English (5-8) (8-12);
Principal/Assistant Principal,
PreK-6; Administrator,
Superintendent/Assistant
Superintendent