
Learning Differences Programme

Partner resource guide



Introduction

Dear Partners,

In the Learning Differences Programme, we believe that together we can build a world in which schools unlock the creativity and power of every young person and equip them to shape more just and equitable communities. We partner with and invest in not-for-profit organisations that improve education for all students, particularly those with learning differences who experience further marginalisation due to racism and poverty.

We focus on three areas of partnership and investment that provide assistance and support to unlock the potential of all students. These are:

- building knowledge and understanding of what works best for diverse learners;
- translating knowledge into practice to build more equitable learning environments and student experiences; and
- influencing systems to embrace and adopt enabling conditions necessary for schools to meet the needs of students furthest from opportunity.

Within each of these areas our partners have developed tools and resources to support students with learning disabilities and learning differences as well as their educators and families. We are committed to Oak-supported resources being freely available to help diverse learners thrive so have developed this guide to help you learn more about some of the tools available. In this document you will find some of the resources our partners have developed. We hope you will find them useful.

Sincerely,
The Learning Differences Programme



Questions? / Get in touch

If you have questions about this resource guide, please contact our colleague Julie Hill at julie.hill@oakfnd.org

FOCUS AREA 1

Build knowledge and understanding of what works best

EdNC

I learn differently, but I'm not different — just unique

This five-part series by the web-based publication EdNC provides an overview of learning differences in the context of North Carolina's education system, with articles focused on the perspectives of students, teachers, and parents.

[READ THE ONLINE PUBLICATION HERE](#)

EdNC

Reaching all Learners: NC in NZ

These four articles in web-based publication EdNC capture learnings from an immersive experience in New Zealand organized by the global Teach for All network. The participants were 16 teacher coaches taking part in the Oak-funded Reaching All Learners Fellowship. This year, the fellowship studied efforts by Teach for All's New Zealand partner to understand and embrace all students' cultures and identities.

[READ THE ONLINE PUBLICATION HERE](#)

Trauma Learning Policy Initiative (TLPI)

Student Voices: Their Perspectives on How Schools Are and Should Be

The Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative based this report on conversations with 73 middle and high school students in urban school systems. The authors asked students what they need in order to do well in school, what their schools could do differently to help them do well, and how their schools should be assessed. The goal was to bring the student voice to plans to create trauma-sensitive, safe and supportive learning environments for all students.

[DISCOVER THE REPORT HERE](#)

FOCUS AREA 2

Translate knowledge into practice

Center for Creative Leadership

ValueAble Leader Project (VLP)

The ValueAble Leader Project is a web app developed by the Center for Creative Leadership that guides users through a process that defines their five core values and tailors a leadership style based on those choices. With it, leaders can identify and articulate their values and understand how to recognize and honor others' values.

[DISCOVER THE WEB APP](#)

College STAR

ThinkUDL

The ThinkUDL podcast, developed and created by College STAR (Supporting Transition Access & Retention), shares the experiences of educators deploying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in higher education.

[LISTEN TO THE PODCASTS](#)

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

Inclusive Leadership Webisode Series

As part of a broader effort to support inclusive principal leadership, the Council of Chief State School Officers produced a guide for states, Supporting Inclusive Schools for the Success of Each Child, in partnership with the CEDAR Center and Oak Foundation. This year CCSSO has launched a webisode series to accompany the guide, with strategies and resources for promoting inclusive principal leadership both in policy and practice.

[DISCOVER THE WEBISODES](#)

Digital Promise

Learner Variability Project

Learner variability is the term Digital Promise uses to describe differences in four attributes critical to learning -- content knowledge, cognition, student background and social-emotional learning. The Learner Variability Project provides educators and ed tech developers with an online, open source tool with which they can define specific learners based on key factors that further define those four attributes -- syntax in reading, for example. Based on the factors they choose, educators can access strategies (such as sample lessons and pertinent products) based on learning science that best address the factors specified.

[DISCOVER THE ONLINE TOOL](#)

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation NCSU

Learning Differences MOOC-Ed

Created by the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University, the Learning Differences MOOC-Ed (Massive Online Open Course for Educators) is a free six-unit course that can be completed in 20-25 hours. It supports teachers and administrators serving students with learning differences in all educational settings.

[DISCOVER THE COURSE OBJECTIVES](#)

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation NCSU

Social and Emotional Learning for Educators MOOC-Ed

North Carolina State University's Friday Institute for Educational Innovation developed this free course to build foundational understanding of how social and emotional learning (SEL) skills are essential to, and inseparable from, student learning. The seven-unit, 25-hour course is designed to work in multiple ways: it complements existing district- and schoolwide programs or can be used in the absence of these programs to support educators in weaving SEL through academic instruction and the school day. The course is organized in alignment with the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework for social emotional learning.

[DISCOVER THE COURSE OBJECTIVES](#)

Learning Designed

Online tool

Conceptualized and shepherded by The UDL Credentialing and Certification Initiative (UDLCCI), Learning Designed is an online learning platform and network created to advance Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Itself built along UDL principles, the platform provides an array of resources to educators, organized in a searchable catalog with criteria ranging from the content area of interest to the design problem that needs to be overcome.

[DISCOVER THE ONLINE TOOL](#)

Learning Designed

UDL Associate Micro Credentials

Learning Designed offers online micro credentials educators can earn to demonstrate basic and intermediate knowledge and skills needed to implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL). The UDL Associate Credential - Level 1 is a foundational credential, demonstrating competency in understanding UDL's importance. The UDL Core Foundation - Level 2 Credential is an opportunity to demonstrate understanding of how a learning experience is designed to anticipate variability and reduce barriers using the UDL Guidelines and the UDL Core Foundation Knowledge Statements.

[DISCOVER THE ONLINE COURSES](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

Evaluation for Specific Learning Disabilities: Allowable Methods of Identification & Their Implications

This 19-page white paper from the National Center for Learning Disabilities examines the history of the methods permissible under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act to determine eligibility for special education due to "specific learning disabilities" or SLD. Each of the allowable methods has unique challenges, and the eligibility criteria for special education under the SLD category is not consistent across states or even across school districts within the same state. The white paper describes advantages, challenges, and research related to the evaluation frameworks currently allowed under federal law and highlights selected state practices to demonstrate the variability in eligibility methods across the country.

[READ THE WHITE PAPER](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

What a Specific Learning Disability Is Not: Examining Exclusionary Factors

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act defines a set of exclusionary factors that must be ruled out before a student can be identified for special education for a specific learning disability (SLD). The exclusionary factors include “environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage” to prevent disproportionate identification, placement, and discipline rates of students of color in special education. Data indicate that disproportionality remains a top concern for parents, educators, policymakers, and advocates. While it is imperative that the evaluation process is free from bias and discrimination, the application of the exclusionary factors raises many challenges. This 18-page paper by the National Center for Learning Disabilities explains the intended function of the exclusionary factors, highlights current implementation challenges, and provides some clarification regarding how exclusionary factors may be used.

[READ THE WHITE PAPER](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

Data-Based Problem Solving: Effective Implementation of MTSS, RTI, and PBIS

Schools deploy several data-based problem-solving approaches including schoolwide frameworks called multi-tier system of supports (MTSS), response to intervention (RTI), or positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). This eight-page white paper by the National Center for Learning Disabilities provides a common language and shared understanding of the terms as an avenue to improved practice and better support for all students.

[READ THE WHITE PAPER](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

Forward Together

Forward Together is a national report created in partnership between the National Center for Learning Disabilities and understood.org based on research conducted to better understand the experience of general education teachers in the classroom as they strive to understand and effectively instruct students with learning and attention issues. Along with this report, they developed audience-specific resources for educators, school leaders, district leaders, and teacher preparation programs.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

Populace

Todd Rose TEDx Talk

Todd Rose is co-founder of Populace, a social impact organization dedicated to advancing our understanding of individuality to transform education and work, and a faculty member at Harvard Graduate School of Education. In this TEDx talk, he uses the story of adjustable seats in fighter jets to address differences among learners.

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

Understood

Understood.org is a web-based platform that offers tools, support, and community to teachers and parents of children with learning and attention issues. Its content includes background readings, webinars, and online expert chats and message boards.

[VISIT THE WEBSITE](#)

FOCUS AREA 3

Influence systems to embrace and adopt enabling conditions necessary for schools to meet the needs of students furthest from opportunity

Center for Curriculum Redesign CCR CCR Framework Rev 1.0

The CCR Framework Rev 1.0 developed by the Center for Curriculum Redesign provides a blueprint for curriculum redesign that encompasses skills, character, and meta-learning often missing in current teaching and learning. The framework lays out these three dimensions in 12 parameters, with their 60 sub-competencies, and a vocabulary of more than 200 associated and related constructs. It supports curriculum that translates the three dimensions into daily practice for teachers and students.

[DISCOVER THE FRAMEWORK](#)

EdNC

Parents' Guide to Learning Differences

This four-part series by the web-based publication EdNC lays out information important to parents of students with learning differences to equip them as advocates for their children.

[DISCOVER THE ONLINE GUIDE](#)

Friday Institute for Educational Innovation NCSU

Students LEAD

Students LEAD is a unique, free, online experience specifically for students developed by the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University to help them understand their own learning. Upon completion of the course, students receive an "Advocacy Plan," which outlines their strengths and challenges and makes recommendations to consider and is shared with their educators. Students LEAD was developed in coordination with middle and high school students from across the country, as well as like-minded organizations, including Eye to Eye, AVID, Project Tomorrow, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools East Wake Academy in North Carolina.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT THE COURSE](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

The State of LD: Understanding 1 in 5

Taking its subtitle from the percentage of students with learning and attention issues, this edition of The State of Learning Differences describes progress made and challenges that remain in the education of those students using the most recent data available. The report by the National Center for Learning Disabilities also makes 16 specific policy recommendations in five areas that will lead to more equitable learning opportunities for those one in five students.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)

Student Voices: A Study of Young Adults with Learning And Attention Issues

Based on responses from 1,221 recent high school graduates with learning differences, Student Voices gathered firsthand information from young adults to determine what factors had the greatest impact on them during their post-high school transition. Research has found this stressful period for all young adults is particularly challenging for those with learning and attention issues (especially those whose issues may not have been formally identified). By exploring the perceptions and attitudes of young adults, the report by the National Center for Learning Disabilities looks beyond traditional measures of success and sheds light on critical factors that are important but often overlooked for those young adults.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

