

Meeting the Needs of Every Student: Our Journey toward becoming an Inclusive Educational System



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Inclusionary Practices in Highline

Background

McMicken Heights Elementary

2016-17: Launched as lab school for inclusive practices in partnership with Dr. Cassie Martin from UW

- Implementation of inclusive practices
- Focus on core instructional time

2018-19

- Focus on visible learning for all learners
- Increased development of data literacy and formative assessments

2020-21

2017-18

- Moved out of Focus School status
- Became Lab school for state

2019-20

- Broadening of special educators' roles across student groups
- Focus on acceleration

Voices from the Field

“My professional practice has changed because I have more knowledge about unit pacing and how to teach various math content areas. I am better at using data to drive instruction – this has been huge for me and I’m applying it to other content areas. It has been easier and more fun than I imagined it would be.”

- Intermediate EBC teacher,
Co-teacher Math and ELA

“Co-teaching has given me more ideas about groupings or even how to structure a block of time in different ways to deliver core content. My differentiating practices have become much more fluid and responsive. We group and regroup students as needed, and we group ALL students, not just students with IEPs. Also, all of our students with IEPs met all their math goals and we were able to begin working on new goals.”

- Intervention Specialist and
3rd grade Co-Teacher

Voices from the Field

“It feels different this year, it feels better because we get to stay in class and now we feel part of the group. Other years we had to leave the class and do work somewhere else. I get more help and it is easier for us to focus when there are two teachers in the class.”

- McMicken Student

“I used to get really annoyed when teachers would tell me, “Oh, you don’t have to do this test, you can just read a book.” Or something cool was happening in class and I would get pulled out and wouldn’t get to do it because I had to go somewhere else and do my reading. I didn’t like it. Now I get to stay in class.”

- McMicken Student

Inclusionary Practices in Highline

Current Efforts

WASA Inclusionary Practices

January 2020
Joined WASA
Inclusive
Practices
Project

September 2020
UDL
Professional
learning
provided to all

October 2020
P-12 TLL session
focused on
Learner Variability
and Unlearning

March 2021
P-12 TLL session
focused on
Inclusionary
Practices

“It’s time to consider that our practices and systems are disabled, not our students.”

- Katie Novak, Novak Education Consulting

WHAT IS UDL?

UDL is Universal Design for Learning, an education framework based on decades of research in neuroscience and endorsed by the Every Student Succeeds Act. UDL is considered best practice for teaching all students in an inclusive learning environment.

The goal of UDL is to create learners who are



Purposeful & Motivated



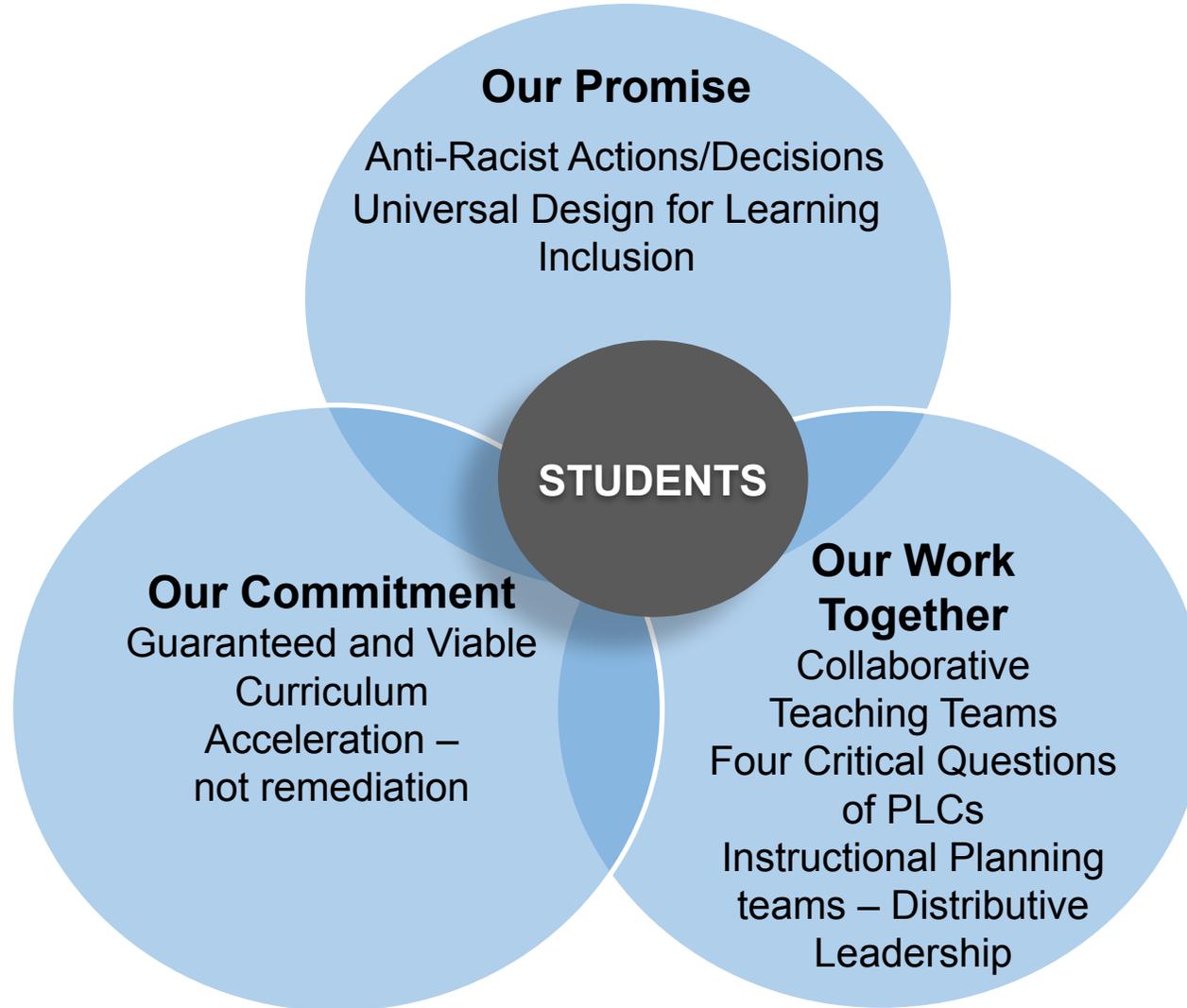
Resourceful & Knowledgeable



Strategic & Goal-directed

in other words, **Expert Learners**

Why Inclusionary Practices?



**Equity by Design
2.0**

Why Universal Design for Learning?

“Regardless of the color of skin, disability, socioeconomic status, or home situation, antiracist teaching demands excellence in a way that communicates honor to the learner. What is the difference between offering help and designing a course that is helpful to every student? What makes the difference is honor. The notion of honor is important to the successful implementation of UDL. Honor is most often communicated in the actions that answer the question, “Who is most important?””

- Andratesha Fritzgerald
Antiracism and Universal Design for Learning

Beliefs - Skills - Systems

Beliefs

- Experience through Professional learning
- Connection to system commitments

Skills

- Modeling through planning and facilitation
- Resources for Professional Learning Communities

Systems

- Structures for Sustainability
- Naming and addressing barriers for systemic implementation

Our Progress

Students

79% understand why what they learn is important
60% agree that their teachers know how they learn best
70% agree that they have choice in how they learn and show understanding

Staff

200,000 Page Views
1,000 active participants

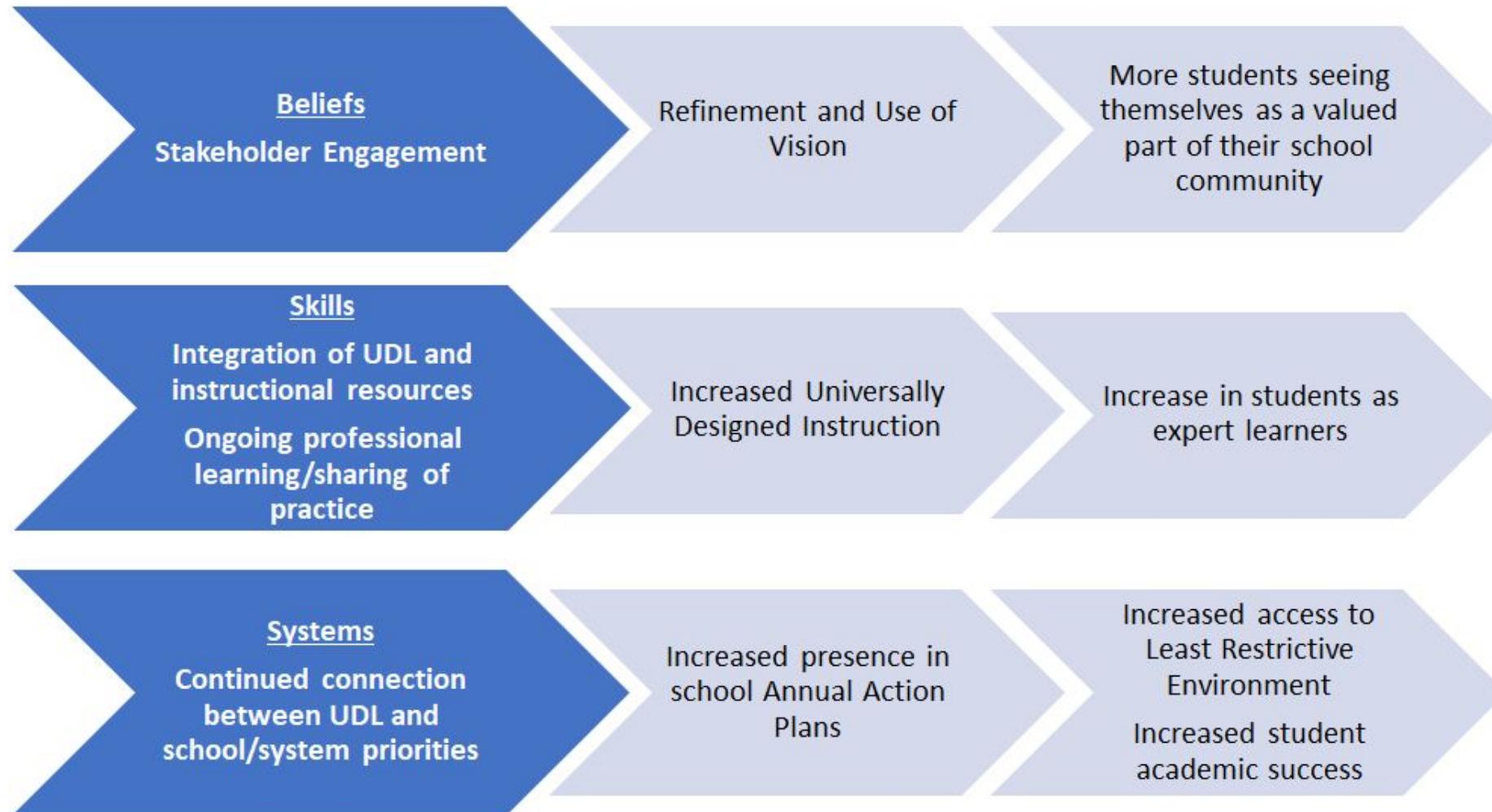
Beyond HPS

17 school/district visits to McMicken
Over 500 webinar participants
Local media recognition

Inclusionary Practices in Highline

Looking Forward

Moving Forward



Creating an Equitable System for All

*“Inclusion is more than a collection of special education services; it is a paradigmatic shift that ensures that **all students are active and participating members of their school communities.***

Historically, a major obstacle to implementing high quality inclusion was that it was incorrectly identified as a special education issue, as opposed to an issue that involves all students, all teachers, and all citizens.”

*Cassie Martin, PhD
University of Washington*

HPS Vision

Every student is known by name, strength, and need by multiple educators.

In order to become an equitable and inclusive school district, Highline is committed to removing the barriers that limit the participation and achievement of all learners. To do this, Highline will honor the diverse needs, abilities, and characteristics of our students. We will strengthen a culture of collaboration and eliminate all forms of discrimination and bias in the learning environment.

HPS Vision

By knowing every student by name, strength, and need, and by honoring the variability in all of our students, we know every student can meet our ambitious expectations for success as a part of the community of the school they attend, while also contributing to the learning experiences of their peers. We will implement a continuum of services at every school and eliminate segregated programming, cognizant of the past and present disproportionate displacement of students due to disciplinary action, language learning status, disability, and any other label we have assigned our students.

HPS Vision

We commit to removing barriers for our students by adjusting our approaches to ensure their success. We will find ways to change for our students rather than asking them to change for us, creating learning environments where learner variability is expected and valued. Our services to our students are not dependent on places that remove them from their peers, but on our beliefs, skills and systems that allow their individual needs to be met to reach their full potential.

Initial Reactions

“It is challenging and motivating to think about this type of change for our students. All of us need to hold beliefs in all of our students. From there, we need to have the courage to change practices, when necessary, and increase our own capacity to serve ...”

“ I am impacted by the statement, ‘We will find ways to change for our students rather than asking them to change for us, creating learning environments where learner variability is expected and valued.’ This statement causes me to lean in and I'm ready to do the work.”

