

# Workshops

## Teaching without Limits: An Introduction to Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

This interactive workshop introduces the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and its powerful potential to create more inclusive, flexible, and engaging classrooms. Participants will explore how to “design from the start” by anticipating and reducing common barriers to learning—rather than reacting to them after the fact.

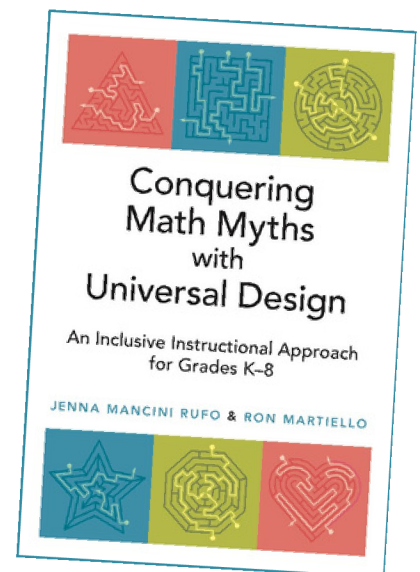
We'll break down the core UDL principles—multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement—into clear, actionable strategies that can be immediately applied in real classrooms. Throughout the session, effective instructional and engagement practices are actively modeled, making this a hands-on, participant-centered experience grounded in practicality and purpose.



## Conquering Math Myths with Universal Design

The teaching and learning of mathematics have long been haunted by myths - myths that some people just aren't “math people,” myths that grade-level content can't be accessed until “prerequisite skills” are taught, and many more.

This session, based on the book by Dr. Rufo of empowerED and co-author, Ron Martiello, provides specific tools and strategies for teachers in grades K-8 to “bust math myths” through universal design. A UDL “toolbox” is referred to throughout the workshop, and revisited as new skills and strategies are taught. We show teachers how to use focus and coherence in their curriculum to prioritize major standards while continuing to address student deficits.



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## UDL, MTSS, and Shared Responsibility for All Learners

This session helps teachers understand how Universal Design for Learning (UDL) connects directly to a strong Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and what that means for daily classroom practice. Participants will explore how designing effective Tier 1 instruction reduces the need for constant interventions, referrals, and “workarounds,” allowing more students to access learning successfully from the start.

Teachers will examine how UDL strategies support flexible grouping, scaffolded practice, and meaningful formative assessment, making it easier to identify which students need additional support and what kind of support is most appropriate. The session clarifies the role of Tier 1 instruction within MTSS and emphasizes shared responsibility—helping educators see how general education, special education, and intervention supports work together rather than in isolation.

Through practical examples and collaborative problem-solving, participants will reflect on common classroom challenges (engagement, readiness gaps, behavior, task avoidance) and identify proactive design moves that support a wider range of learners. Teachers will leave with a clearer understanding of how UDL helps streamline support systems, improves instructional decision-making, and creates classrooms where more students can succeed without being labeled or removed from core instruction.



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## Access with Intention: Accommodations and Modifications in Practice

This session builds on the foundation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and offers a deeper look at how to support students with disabilities through appropriate instructional adjustments. Participants will gain a clear understanding of the difference between accommodations and modifications—what they are, when to use them, and how they impact student access and expectations.

Through real-world examples and practical tools, educators will explore how to thoughtfully adapt and modify instruction and content while maintaining meaningful learning outcomes. Emphasis is placed on proactive planning, clarity in instructional goals, and ensuring that changes to materials or expectations continue to promote equity, dignity, and inclusion.

This session is especially valuable for educators who work with students receiving specialized services or supports and want concrete strategies to deliver instruction that meets diverse needs without compromising rigor or belonging.

## Curriculum Essentialization

This workshop introduces the practice of essentialization—the process of identifying the most key concepts within the curriculum and creating intentional access points for students with significant disabilities. Rather than relying on last-minute modifications and oversimplification of concepts without context, educators will learn how to proactively break down complex content into meaningful, accessible learning experiences.

Rooted in the belief that all students deserve to engage in rich, authentic instruction, this session empowers educators to plan thoughtfully for inclusion, ensuring students with complex needs are truly part of the learning community—not adjacent to it. Participants will explore tools, strategies, and mindsets that support deep learning, high expectations, and dignity for every student.

**“Just finished your session and I wanted to thank you for a worthwhile three hours of my time. Your presentation was informative, interesting, and useful.”**

**- General Education Teacher,  
California**

