Cultivating Differentiated Instruction:  
*Growing the Teachers Who Grow the Kids*

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A Successful Day:
- Develop a personal definition of differentiated instruction;
- See the value in investing in leadership for differentiation;
- Articulate how change and motivation principles affect individuals;
- Explain differentiation along a long-term, vision-focused plan;
- Recognize the power of conversation to deepen the quality of differentiated instruction; and
- Determine how to know when real growth in differentiation is happening
Adherence to schedule
Technology management
Engagement and participation
Clarity and understanding
Questions and conversation

GROW IN OUR UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENTIATION
Please follow these steps designed to help you reflect on, share, and extend your understanding of differentiation:

1. Jot down your current best understanding of what differentiation is. Assume you’re explaining it to a new teacher who has little acquaintance with differentiation.

2. Share your definition with a group of about 4 at your table. Please ask one another questions that will help “unpack” a fuller sense of a person’s ideas.

3. Use the laminated “mats” at your table to talk about shared understandings and common misunderstandings you encounter about differentiation in your work.

SO many definitions...

SO many questions...

What would we think about to plan and practice quality differentiation?
Differentiation is not a set of strategies, but rather a way of thinking about teaching & learning.
Kids differ as learners.

To learn well, each kid needs challenge and success.

We can’t accomplish that by ignoring student differences.

Attending to the differences requires a flexible approach to teaching.

Rooted in an inviting environment, assessment to inform instruction, and flexible management.

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Differentiation is a sequence of common sense decisions made by teachers with a student-first orientation.

Adam Hoppe, 2010
The Common Sense of Differentiation:

Ensuring an environment that actively supports students in the work of learning (mindset, connections, community),

Absolute clarity about a powerful learning destination (KUDs, engagement, understanding),

Persistently knowing where students are in relation to the destination all along the way (formative assessment for and as instruction),

Adjusting teaching to make sure each student arrives at the destination and, when possible, moves beyond it (addressing readiness, interest, learning profile), and

Effective leadership & management of flexible classroom routines.
How are these ideas about differentiation similar to the definitions in your mind? To the ones used in your schools?

How are they different? Would it make any difference in practice in your schools if the majority of teachers operated from this perspective on differentiation? Please talk with a “fence partner” or two.
DETERMINE WHY NOW IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR DIFFERENTIATION

Academically Diverse Students:

• Today’s classrooms are typified by academic diversity (Darling Hammond, Wise, & Klein, 1999; Meier, 1995).

• Seated side-by side in classrooms are:
  – …students with learning disabilities and reading difficulties
  – …highly advanced learners
  – …English language learners
  – …students who chronically underachieve
  – …students from broadly diverse cultures
  – …students from highly diverse economic backgrounds
  – …students of both genders
  – …students displaying varying degrees of motivation, interests, skills, etc.
Academically Diverse Students:

- In 1970, 12% of the U.S. population was non-white.
- In 2000, 30% were of non-white, non-Anglo-European ancestry.
- In the period from 1980-2000, the white, non-Hispanic population grew by 7.9%.
- The population that identified itself as non-white or Hispanic grew by 88%.


Thinking about English Language Learners

- More immigrants arrived in the US in the 1990s than in any other decade on record.
- Today, students in U.S. schools speak more than 450 languages.
- More than 12% of all pre-K-12 students in the U.S. are considered English language learners.
- As of 2014, Caucasian students are no longer the majority population in U.S. schools. In a short time, more than ½ of U.S. students won’t speak English as their first language.

• 96% of general education teachers in the U.S. have students with disabilities in their classrooms.

• On average, there are at least 3-4 students with IEPs integrated into each general education class in the U.S.

• Three of four U.S. students with disabilities spend 40% or more of their day in general education classes.

• One in five children in the U.S. suffers from some emotional or behavioral condition.

• National Academy of Sciences (Reported in Time Magazine, 11-01-10 Keeping Young Minds Healthy, p. 41.

Thinking just about Students with Disabilities:

• Approximately 3 to 5 students in 100 in the U.S. have ADHD.

• Approximately 1 child in 59 in the U.S. is diagnosed with a learning disability.

SOURCE: National Institutes of Mental Health
Thinking just about Students with Disabilities:

• Autism Spectrum Disorder prevalence in the U.S. has recently been adjusted from 4 or 5 children in 10,000 to 1 child in about 150


• The U.S. has the highest rate of child poverty in the developed world.
• The school dropout rate is 2 ½ times higher among children of poverty than among students from non-poor homes.
• Children of poverty are 2 ½ times more likely to perform poorly in school than their more affluent peers.
• Children of poverty are 2 ½ times more likely to develop a conduct disorder.

Poverty in the U.S.
In spite of the great & growing variety of students in our classrooms...

...and abundant evidence that schools do not serve all students well...

We still teach as though all students of a given age are essentially alike!
1) Which groups of students are very well served in your school or district right now (engaged, excited, growing academically each day)? What’s your evidence?

2) Which groups of students are not so well served? What’s your evidence?

3) What would you hope to improve for students by helping teachers become more competent and confident in addressing student variance?

LEAD SO ALL ARE GROWING
Let’s start by exploring what happened to Culver Elementary School . . .

• Quickly skim the case study at your tables.
• With your table mates, answer the three questions at the end of the second page.
• Be ready to report!

Culver and the Orchestration of Change:

Are there predictable phases?

Is it school change or individual change?

Can it be accelerated? Adjusted?
“INDIVIDUALS HAVE TO CHANGE BEFORE THE SCHOOL CAN CHANGE.”

--HORD AND ROUSSIN, 2013

### WHAT TEACHERS MUST LEARN IN ORDER TO DIFFERENTIATE EFFECTIVELY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOW</th>
<th>UNDERSTAND</th>
<th>DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Key Elements of differentiation</td>
<td>Differentiation is a philosophy (more than a set of strategies)</td>
<td>Reflect on philosophy and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mindset</td>
<td>Differentiation is designed to maximize the capacity of each learner.</td>
<td>Create and maintain an invitational learning environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know-Understand-Do (KUD)</td>
<td>Mindset shapes teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Develop KUD frameworks, drawing on standards.</td>
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<td>Engagement</td>
<td>Teacher connection with kids opens them up to the risk of learning.</td>
<td>Develop formative assessments aligned with KUDs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Community multiplies support for students &amp; the teacher.</td>
<td>Interpret assessment results to determine students’ learning needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alignment</td>
<td>On-going assessment guides quality differentiation.</td>
<td>Develop differentiated tasks based on assessment information in response to student readiness, interest, learning profile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-going assessment (pre-assessment, formative, summative)</td>
<td>The quality of what we teach contributes to the impact of how we teach -- &amp; vice versa.</td>
<td>Work with students to understand differentiation and establish flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexible Grouping</td>
<td>Flexible classroom routines balance group and individual needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respectful Tasks</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Readiness, Interest, Learning Profile</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural Responsiveness</td>
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<td>Teaching Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional strategies for differentiation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Equity/Excellence</td>
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Thinking about it . . . Consistent and effective practice
What does the learner need at each stage?

**Novice**
- Unsettled by the ambiguous and organic nature of differentiation
- Seeks algorithmic processes and expects "mastery" of differentiation
- Focuses on the challenges instead of the benefits/necessity
- Seeks solutions that are already part of a repertoire of strategies instead of redefining the nature of curriculum and instruction
- Identifies the challenges inherent in high prep differentiation (grading, major projects) instead of focusing on low prep possibilities
- Lacks a big picture understanding of the philosophy due to misrepresentations about good curriculum/instruction (e.g., assessment and evaluation)
- Lacks persistence and a willingness to work at understanding and evaluation

**Apprentice**
- Tolerates the ambiguous nature of differentiation
- Understands the philosophy of differentiation but lacks confidence in application
- Acknowledges gaps in personal understanding and skills with differentiating curriculum and instruction
- Makes surface level connections between differentiation and other models/strategies inherent in good curriculum/instruction
- Demonstrates a willingness to work through challenges with some persistence
- Distinguishes between a good curriculum/instruction and that which is differentiated
- Asks thoughtful questions about both the philosophy and the application
- Can accurately explain differentiation as a concept

**Practitioner**
- Accepts the ambiguous nature of differentiation
- Demonstrates accuracy and confidence in explaining differentiation of curriculum and instruction
- Makes connections among various methods within a discipline in order to facilitate differentiation
- Understands the connections among content, process, product, and learning environment when differentiation is achieved in the areas of readiness, interest, and learning profile (or any combination of the areas)
- Exhibits a belief in differentiation, but lacks confidence at times in addressing challenges
- Recognizes and avoids the "quick fix" to differentiating curriculum and instruction

**Expert**
- Practice and ongoing support in the differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and self development
- Opportunities to work collaboratively with specialists in the differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and staff development in a variety of settings
- Opportunities to work, train, and retrain in differentiated curriculum, instruction, and staff development
- Confidence in application
- Opportunities for discussion and analysis of differentiated instruction and learning profiles and teaching situations
- Opportunities to implement the differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and learning profiles
- Opportunities to explain the differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and learning profiles
- Practice and ongoing support in the differentiation of curriculum and instruction

**What is differentiation?**
- Differentiation of curriculum and instruction
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The Leader’s Cultivation of Differentiation:

Getting Ready → Deeply Embedded

Beginning Work

Changes in Feelings and Reactions

Approach to the Work—From Novice to Expert

What Do People Need Along the Way?

Autonomy

Purpose

Mastery
MASTER THIS FORMULA:
LONG-TERM CHANGE = CULTIVATION OF NEEDS + THE RIGHT NUTRIENTS

- Shared common cause and vision
- Shared early experiences
- Reassurance and small steps
- Personal integration
- Training for knowledge
- Trusting relationships
- Transparency
- Personal and social responsibility

- Resource management
- Collaborative planning
- Professional learning focused on implementation
- Time to work on it
- Cooperative assessment of results
- Troubleshooting and corrections
- Shared common cause and vision
- Shift of focus to students

- Structure adjustments
- Rules/regulations
- “Refined implementation”
- Collegial dialogue and system improvements
- Integration with other initiatives
- Evaluation and recommitment to the work
Find your ROLE-ALIKE partner:

- Assess “where you are” in terms of your differentiation journey—what “phase” are you right now?
- As you place your “X,” remember to let it mark differentiation in terms of individual concerns and individual teacher development.
- What might you do to accelerate the development of deep differentiation strategies? What do people need?
Do People Have a Clear Vision?

Vision for Differentiation

- Getting Ready
- Beginning Work
- Change Plan Year One
- Change Plan Year Two
- Change Plan Year Three
- Deeply Embedded

ENGAGE IN CONVERSATIONS TO LEAD, LEARN, AND ASSESS
Typical Leader-Teacher Conversations:

"It won’t work . . . I don’t have time . . . I don’t understand what you want me to do . . . This isn’t that important to me . . ."

Authoritarian “Telling”  vs.  Collaborative “Coaching”

Engaging in the Layered Conversation:

Discover the Information  →  Interpret and Speculate  →  Decide/Do  →  Implement and Evolve

+  

Collaborative  →  Optimistic  →  Experimental
A CONVERSATION CASE STUDY . . .

Conversations to LEARN:

- Frequent
- One-to-One
- Separate from Teacher Evaluation
- Check on Concerns with “Worried About”
- Check on Use with “How Are You . . .”
- Getting Ready
- Beginning Work
- Deeply Embedded
Apply What We’ve Learned:

• Conversations with teachers are so important!
• Take a look at the materials we have reviewed today.
• Watch the video clip.
• Select one of the five key elements of differentiation in which you think the teacher in the clip has shown particular strengths. Work with a colleague to map out how you might best share your insights with the teacher in a way that encourages continuing growth.
• Select one of the elements of differentiation which you think is likely an important next step for the teacher based on what you saw in the video clip. Again, work with your colleague to map out how you might talk with the teacher about this.

WHAT are You Interested in Assessing?

1) Teacher Attitude About the Change?
2) Teacher Learning of Differentiated Instruction?
3) School Structure Changes to Support?
4) Application of Differentiated Strategies in the Classroom?
5) Student Learning as a Result of the Efforts?

“Means” Goals

“Ends” Goals

Getting Ready

Deeply Embedded

Beginning Work