

# Characteristic of Effective Instruction

## *Teaching for Learner Differences*

**Purpose:** The purpose of this brief is to provide Iowa Educators with a clearer understanding of what is meant by Teaching for Learner Differences as a Characteristic of Effective Instruction within the Iowa Core Curriculum.

**Definition:** Teaching for Learner Differences is about planning for and responding to variances among learners in the classroom in order to create the best learning experience possible. It also includes processes for determining the effectiveness of instruction, using data to guide instructional decision-making, and ensuring access to/success with regard to the core curriculum for all students.

Teaching for Learner Differences is a framework which provides processes so that all students have access to the general education curriculum. It is best accomplished through a proactive approach where student and environmental data are used to plan for, implement, and adjust for the needs of all students.

### **Theory of Action:**

If teachers 1) use a process that provides access to curriculum for all students, 2) develop an instructional plan based on the assessed needs of individual students or groups of students, and 3) determine a process to determine the effectiveness of instruction and to guide adjustments.....then they are better able to make sound instructional decisions to meet the needs of all students.

### **Attributes of Teaching for Learner Differences**

Critical attributes of Teaching for Learner Differences include planning, instructing, and assessing/evaluating.

#### Planning

Teaching for Learner Differences begins with planning for variances among learners in the classroom.

#### Instructing

Instruction is designed to meet the varied needs of students in the classroom.

#### Assessment and evaluation

Teachers use information gathered during evaluation to determine the success of planning and instruction, and to make necessary adjustments.

## Teaching for Learner Differences

What it is:	What it is NOT:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching for Learner Differences through IDM is about meeting the needs of all students while maintaining high expectations for all students. It aligns with and supports all services and programs within a school.</li><li>• Teaching for Learner Differences is focused on appropriate instruction and focused on each and every student.</li><li>• It is data driven, a collaborative effort, proactive, a seamless continuum of instructional delivery, fluid, interactive, and responsive.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching for Learner Differences is not about lowering expectations or changing the Iowa Core Curriculum essential concepts and skills.</li><li>• It is not a sorting and tracking system that keeps student performing at low levels.</li><li>• It is not about assessing students and disregarding the data.</li><li>• It is not reactive, nor done in isolation.</li></ul>

**Planning**--Teaching for Learner Differences begins with planning for variances among learners in the classroom.

Teachers:

- Assess the needs of individual students or groups of students (interest, readiness, learning profile).
- Identify learning goals (targets) for the lesson (essential concepts and skill sets).
- Gather information about students with regard to potential barriers to learning, student needs, and student preferences (i.e., materials, media, methods, and student activities).
- Identify what they and their students will do with regard to pacing, content, process, product, and environment.
- Determine what assessments to use, including probing/guiding questions, assessment *FOR* learning, and summative assessments.
- Plan for students to demonstrate understanding through multiple means
- Prepare necessary materials, resources (including time and personnel), and technology