

## Addressing the needs of ALL learners

When trying to address the needs of all learners, it is important to understand that students experience many barriers to learning. Some learning barriers could be ADD/ADHD, dyslexia, hearing impairments, lack of motivation or engagement, and English learners. Teachers can help students overcome these barriers by making the content more accessible, differentiating the learning activities, or providing choices to students as they demonstrate their learning. Utilizing digital tools can help teachers differentiate instruction and support all learners by:

- allowing students to collaborate in real-time,
- giving students the choice to determine how they will show mastery of content,
- providing timely feedback in audio, video, or text formats based on the needs of the learner,
- employing a variety of digital formative and summative assessment tools,
- creating new ways to interact with content such as virtual field trips and gamification,
- providing video tutorials that allow students to watch and rewatch at their own pace,
- incorporating reading supports through digital flashcards, leveled texts, audio, formats, and visual dictionaries, and
- utilizing accessibility tools such as speech-to-text, closed captioning, screen contrast, font size, screen readers.



## SUMMARY

**Utilize technology to help all students access and interact with content, make sense of new ideas and information, and demonstrate their learning.**

- Use technology tools as needed to scaffold and support instruction
- Ensure all learning activities allow for differentiation, voice, and choice
- Teach students to utilize assistive technology and accessibility tools when appropriate

## Why it matters



- >> The mission of the **Mississippi State Board of Education** is to create a world-class educational system that gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in college and the workforce, and to flourish as parents and citizens. Supporting this mission are six goals, the first two of which are: (1) all students proficient and showing growth in all assessed areas, and (2) every student graduates from high school and is ready for college and career. Addressing the needs of all learners is how we can help create college-and-career-ready students that will contribute to our global communities.
- >> According to the **Access for All Guide 2.0**, More inclusive and diverse general education classrooms have made it imperative for educators to gain a working knowledge of adapting curricula, assessments, and instruction to meet the changing needs of their students and promote success (Conderman, Liberty, & Despain, 2017). If curriculum and instruction are not adapted to meet the individual needs and abilities of diverse learners, then students on the edges or margins—including those with learning differences, gifted learners, and culturally diverse learners—most often miss opportunities to learn at levels that are personally appropriate (Delisle, 2018). Adapting teaching and learning practices is instrumental in creating an inclusive learning environment where all students are actively engaged, challenged, and valued.

## What it looks like in practice



### PRINCIPALS SEE

Teachers utilize a variety of digital resources, such as videos, audiobooks, and digital notebooks to support and scaffold instruction

Teachers differentiate learning activities to provide student voice in choice as they demonstrate mastery of content

Students know when and how to use digital accessibility tools

### TEACHERS SEE

Students can choose different methods to demonstrate their learning

Students utilize allowable accessibility tools, such as speech-to-text or text-to-speech, to make the content or assignments more accessible

Students use digital tools to collaborate with the teacher and their peers

### FAMILIES SEE

Students can showcase their learning in a variety of ways

Students have access to digital resources, such as tutorial videos or digital flashcards, that can help them understand difficult content.

Teachers frequently monitor student progress and communicate with students and families using digital tools



## What you can try

- >> Provide reading supports with Immersive Reader, which allows for students to have sections or pages read aloud to them. It also allows the user to change the background color, change the speed of the reader, highlight parts of speech, utilize a picture dictionary, translate text, etc. These tools within Immersive Reader allow for differentiation in context.
- >> Utilize diverse media types within Nearpod. Within this tool, there are many ways to engage students with different formative assessment questioning types. Students can explore through a virtual field trip, expand their knowledge through embedded web content, etc.
- >> Examine the [Access for All Guide 2.0](#) for ideas on how to adapt what is taught, how it is taught, and how the learning is demonstrated, in order to meet the needs of all learners.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### REFERENCES

Robinson, J. (2016, June 21). *How Can We Best Address the Learning Needs of Our Students?* National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. <https://www.nbpts.org/how-can-we-best-address-the-learning-needs-of-our-students/>

**8 Lessons Learned on Differentiating Instruction** A middle school teacher explains how she turned the theories set forth at a seminar into practical strategies that work.

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/8-lessons-learned-differentiating-instruction/>

**Access for All Guide 2.0** Developed by the Mississippi Department of Education, in collaboration with educators across the state, to help teachers address issues that impact learners with a wide variety of needs.

<https://www.mdek12.org/OAE/2019-Access-for-All-Guide>

**Addressing Students' Individual Learning Needs** Five veteran teachers share their own strategies for reaching individual learners' needs and supporting a variety of skill levels while maintain order and staying on track with their curriculum.

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collections/teaching-content/addressing-students39individual-learning-needs/>

**Leveraging Technology to Support Students' Needs** Teachers can apply a concept called 'tech equity' to ensure that the technology they use is enhancing learning for all of their students.

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/leveraging-technology-support-students-needs>

**ISTE Standards** The ISTE Standards provide competencies for learning, teaching and leading in the digital age, providing a comprehensive roadmap for the effective use of technology in schools worldwide.

<https://www.iste.org/iste-standards>