

School-Family Partnership Series: Differentiating to Support ALL BTS Students

Lauren Zugale
Director of Student Services
2023-2024



Differentiation in the classroom: 101



- ★ Having high expectations for all students
- ★ Using data to drive instructional decision making and focus on student progress
- ★ Areas that can be differentiated may include: content, process, product or learning environment
- ★ Considering different learning styles, interests, and levels of thinking
- ★ Providing students with choices about what and how they learn
- ★ Flexible grouping based upon students' instructional needs, interests and topics
- ★ Acknowledging individual needs
- ★ Continually assessing and adjusting

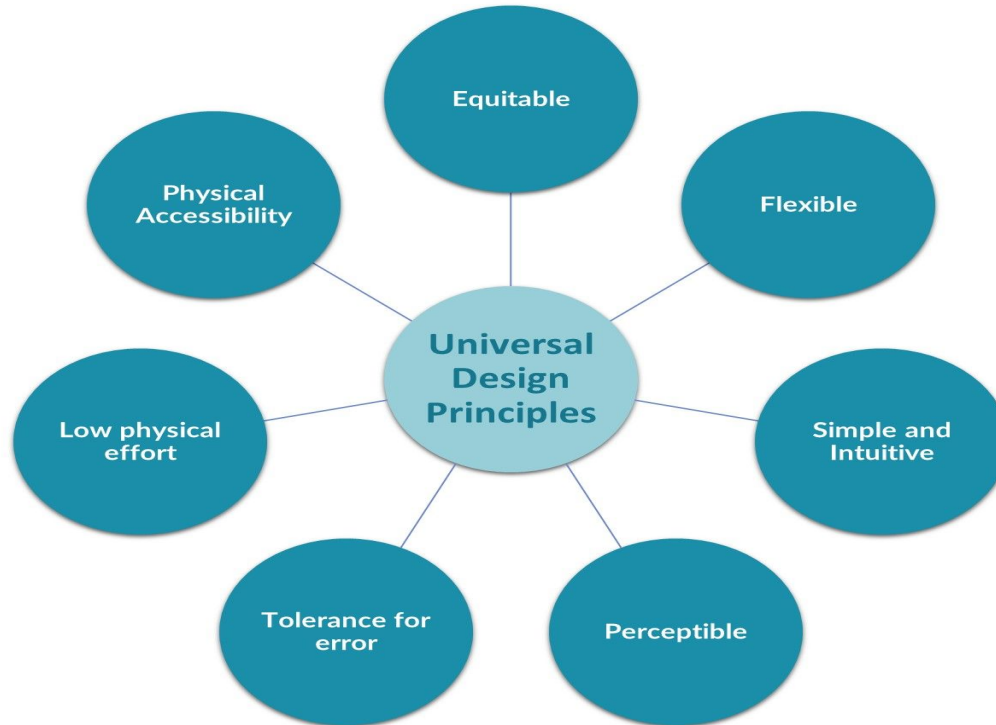
Why is differentiation essential?



- ★ BTS has a shared philosophy that ALL students can learn and that teachers facilitate learning through support and guidance
- ★ Differentiation is considered best practice for supporting students academically, socially and emotionally
- ★ Respects and honors individual differences and interests
- ★ Ample research supporting differentiation
- ★ Legal compliance → Least Restrictive Environment
- ★ Part of staff evaluation process

Universal Design Principles

(<https://www.adcet.edu.au/disability-practitioner/course-design-and-implementation/universal-design>)



What this may look like in your child's classroom...

- Centers/ Workstations (choice, interest, leveled, etc.)
- Project based learning
- Explicit instruction including regular small group or 1:1 sessions
- Checklists, visuals, graphic organizers, worked through models, sentence starters, manipulatives
- Flexible seating and flexible groupings
- Teaching and practicing self regulation/advocacy/monitoring
- Socratic Seminar
- Choice boards
- Flipped classroom
- Backwards design
- Leveled extension activities



How to Support Your Child

- Talking to your child about what he/she is learning in school
- Understanding that differentiation has a time and place; teachers cannot (and should not) differentiate all assignments and materials every day
- Encouraging your child to communicate with teachers about his or her learning
- Encouraging your child to focus on self-growth rather than comparing themselves to peers
- Empowering your child by practicing self-advocacy skills with you (ex: reflecting on learning, talking to a teacher, checking Genesis, executive functioning skills, etc.)
- Communicating with a teacher if you have questions, concerns, or positive feedback



Guiding Quote

