

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 723

Celebrating 40 years of Universal Design for Learning.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 4, 2024

Ms. HASSAN (for herself and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution;
which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Celebrating 40 years of Universal Design for Learning.

Whereas, in 1975, Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94–142; 89 Stat. 773), later renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), to support States and localities in protecting the rights of, and meeting the individual needs of, infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities, and their families;

Whereas the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) has helped students with disabilities receive an education in neighborhood schools, rather than in separate schools and institutions, and efforts have since grown to make education programs more effective and inclusive for all learners;

Whereas, in 1984, uniform Federal accessibility standards were established to improve access to, and function of, public walkways, transportation, housing, and other public services;

Whereas Federal accessibility standards for Universal Design for Learning help ensure that all people can use public services to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation, specialization, or retrofitting;

Whereas dedicated education researchers, neuroscientists, and experts in child development have applied the principles of Universal Design for Learning to educational settings by exploring ways to use new technologies, flexible methods, and varied learning materials to provide better educational experiences for students with disabilities;

Whereas the Universal Design for Learning framework—

(1) is intentional in ensuring that learning experiences and environments harness technology, the learning sciences, and instructional practices to remove barriers to learning in all settings, such as physical, digital, or blended, and recognizes that not all individuals learn in the same way;

(2) is based on the 3 principles of multiple means of engagement, multiple representations of content or recognition, and multiple means of action and expression;

(3) supports creating flexible learning environments and experiences that anticipate learner variability and acknowledge that variability across all learners is the norm rather than the exception; and

(4) supports educators in their professional learning and application of new skills in all K–16 teaching environments, including general and special education, career

and technical education, and science, technology, engineering, and math;

Whereas Congress has recognized the value of Universal Design for Learning in—

(1) the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110–315; 122 Stat. 3078);

(2) the Every Student Succeeds Act (Public Law 114–95; 129 Stat. 1802);

(3) the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.); and

(4) the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Public Law 115–224; 132 Stat. 1563); and

Whereas the Department of Education, Department of Labor, and National Science Foundation, in partnership with public and private organizations and State and local entities, demonstrate the principles of Universal Design for Learning through programs and initiatives—

(1) to support the professional learning of K–16 administrators and classroom instructors in general education, special education, English language education, career and technical education, and science, technology, engineering and math education;

(2) to expand educational opportunity and reengage youth, young adult, and adult learners with significant or multiple barriers to learning;

(3) to increase postsecondary opportunities for adults seeking new or expanded opportunities and completion of 2-year and 4-year career and technical education, and science, technology, engineering, and math programs;

(4) to expand the knowledge of postsecondary and career and technical education faculty and adult literacy instructors of Universal Design for Learning to ensure greater engagement and success of adult learners;

(5) to strengthen K–16 and adult learning experiences and improve education and career outcomes through use of blended learning: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the important role of Universal
3 Design for Learning in professional development for
4 all educators to help break down barriers to learning
5 for all children, youth, and adults;

6 (2) commends the leadership, innovation, and
7 commitment of several generations of researchers,
8 educators, parents, and others committed to expand-
9 ing access and opportunity to education and employ-
10 ment for all individuals, including those historically
11 marginalized due to race, language, income, or dis-
12 ability; and

13 (3) celebrates 40 years of innovative research
14 and practice leading to the creation and widespread
15 adoption of Universal Design for Learning in the
16 United States.

○