# Inclusive Education at High School

District School Council – March 4, 2019
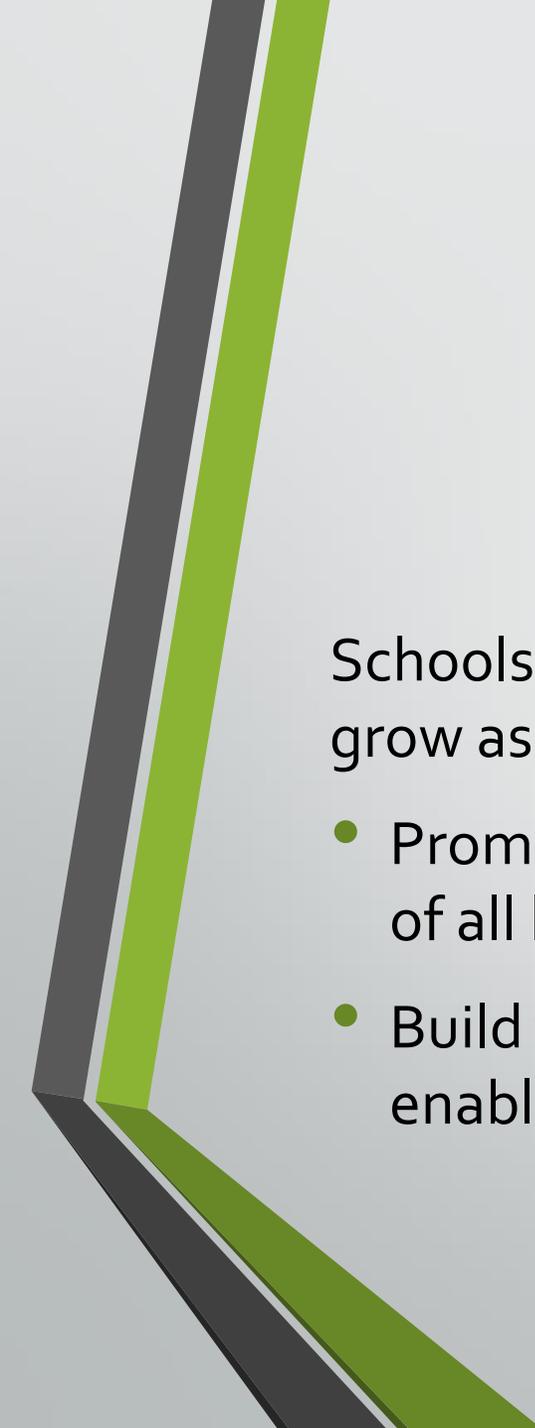
Lethbridge 51
Priority 2 - Inclusion

Schools are inclusive learning environments where all students are able to grow as learners.

- Promote and support the culture of valuing diversity and high expectations of all learners.

- Build the capacity of all staff to demonstrate approaches/ strategies that enable all learners to access the Programs of Study

Strategies to Support Priority 2

- Shelley Moore speaks to inclusion at Lethbridge 51 opening breakfast in August

- Professional learning on *Indicators of Inclusive Schools*, 2013

- Continue to develop RTI framework, as articulated by Alberta Education, with a focus on classroom instruction (Embedded in updated support planning tool in Dossier)

- Focus instruction and learning through the lens of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

- Develop the common understanding that the Programs of Study are the starting point for all students' learning (Embedded in updated support planning tool in Dossier)

- Continue to build teacher capacity to support literacy and language acquisition
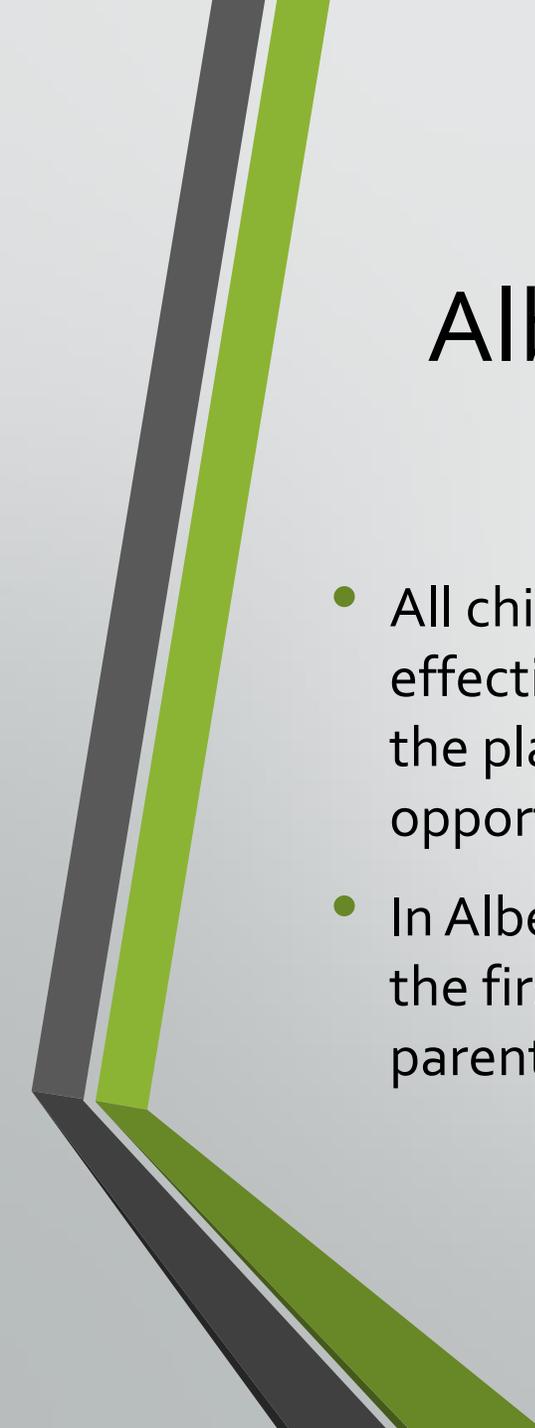
Alberta Education Perspective on Inclusion

- All children can learn and reach their full potential when they get opportunities, effective teaching and appropriate resources. It is best to make decisions related to the placement of students on an individual basis in a way that maximizes their opportunity to participate fully in the experience of schooling.

- In Alberta, educating students with special education needs in inclusive settings is the first placement option considered by school authorities in consultation with parents, and when appropriate, the students.

Alberta Education

Flexible and Responsive Learning Environments

Every learner has unique needs. Some learners have profound and ongoing needs and others have short-term or situation-based needs. This calls for flexible and responsive learning environments that can adapt to the changing needs of learners. For some learners, the most responsive and flexible learning environment may include:

- Instruction and support in a grade-level classroom with same-aged peers
- Individualized instruction in smaller group settings
- A specialized classroom or setting
- One-on-one instruction
- A combination of all the above   Alberta Education

Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2) supports flexible approaches

Universal

Targeted

Individualized
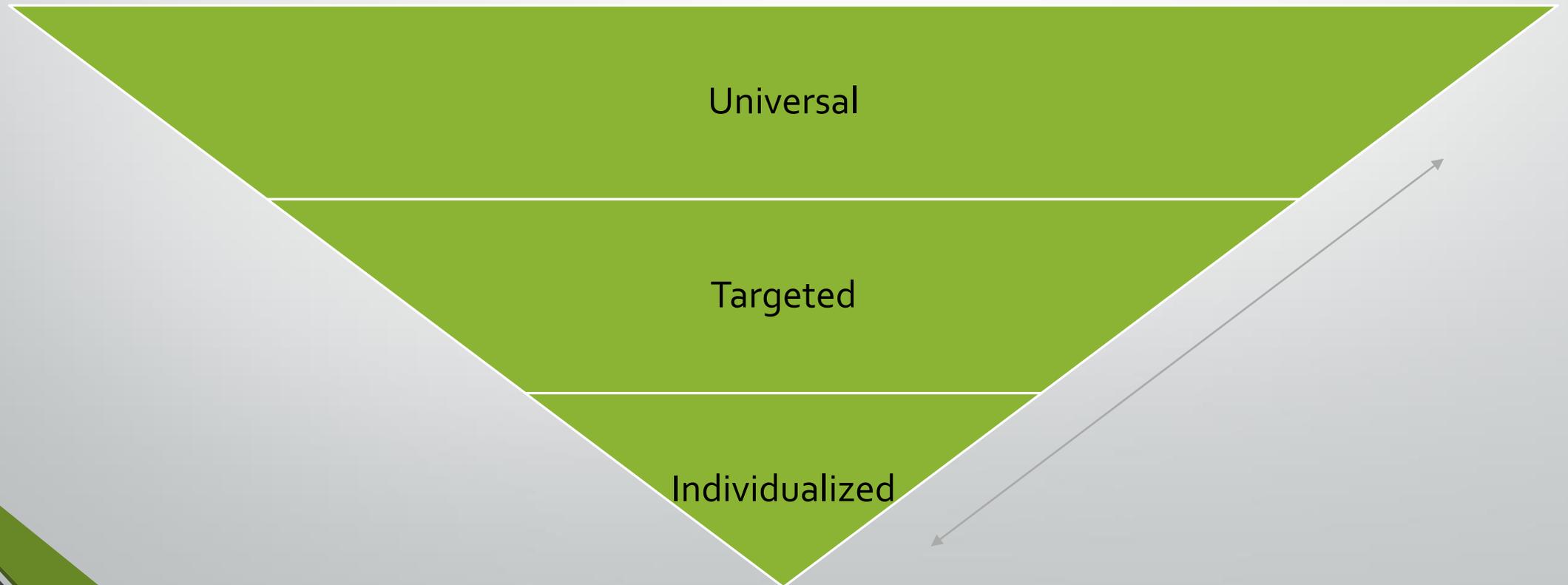
Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2)

Flexible and responsive supports include:

- Universal supports - incorporated into the environment for all learners, such as flexible learning resources and technologies, differentiated instruction and positive behaviour supports (We are focusing on UDL to address learner variability)

- Targeted strategies or interventions - for learners who need more targeted learning opportunities or access to more specialized expertise (LLI)

- Specialized/Individualized supports - that directly relate to individual learning needs such as the use of sign language interpreters, alternate and augmentative communication systems (ACC), or mental health support

District Supports for Inclusion at All Levels

- Personnel such as Learning Support Teachers, Advanced Educational Support, Educational Assistants, admin in charge of learning support, Director

- Student Engagement Consultant

- District and contracted psychologists

- FNMI District Principal and Liaisons

- Lead teachers – literacy, numeracy, technology and ESL

- Counselling and Making Connections

- Resources to support accessibility & planning– mobile lifts, technology, FM systems, Dossier

- Contracted supports – adapted PE, music therapy, behaviour support

Partner Support for Inclusion at All Levels

South West Regional Collaborative Service Delivery (SWRCSD) – collaborative cross-ministry partnership that delivers supports and services to children, youth, and families

- Therapy services – SLP/OT/PT and mental health supports

- Low-Incidence Team – teachers of the deaf or hard of hearing and visually impaired/AAC Team

- Complex Case
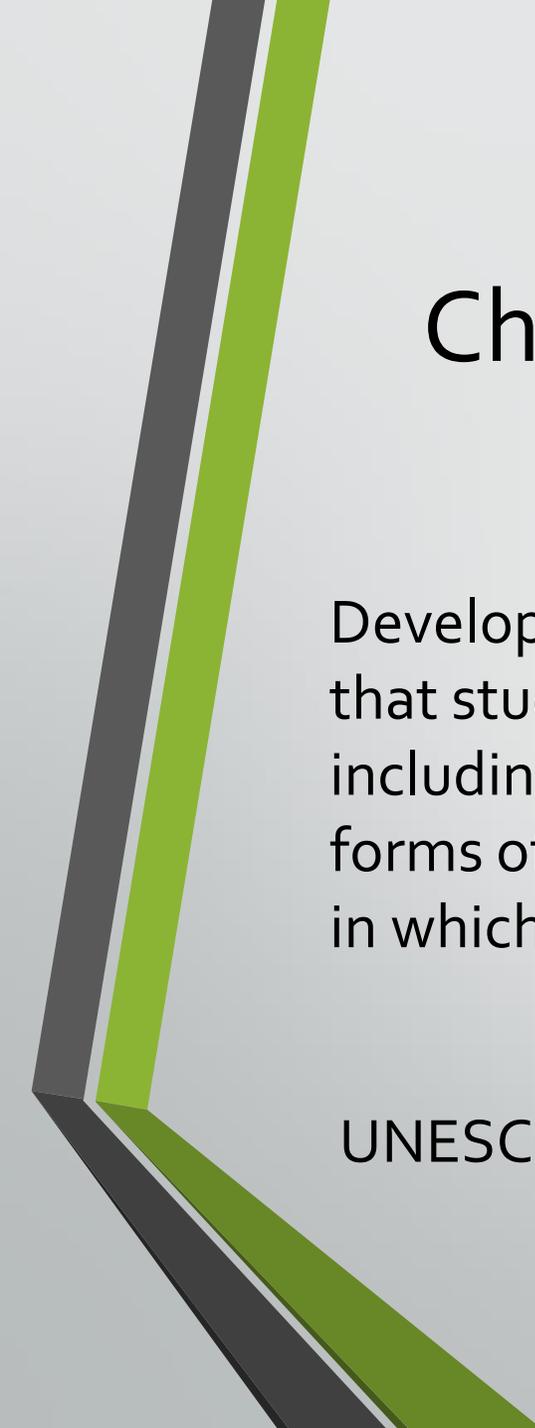
Challenges for Inclusive Policy and Practice

Developing policies that are inclusive and equitable requires the recognition that students' difficulties arise from aspects of the education system itself, including: the ways in which education systems are organized currently, the forms of teaching that are provided, the learning environment, and the ways in which students' progress is supported and evaluated.

UNESCO – *A guide for ensuring inclusion and equity in education, 2017*

Alberta High School Context

- Available pathways to graduation – High School Diploma, Certificate of High School Achievement, Certificate of High School Completion

- Differentiation of instruction and assessment is viewed as implicit in provision of leveled course offerings … -1, -2, -3, and -4

- Challenges of working within students' "zone of proximal development" as curriculum demands increase at high school

- Not all high school teachers have experience in assessing and teaching basic literacy and numeracy, yet some students still need this support. (As a district, we need to move this expertise into high school, along with the resources to support learners in developing these basic skills.)

Maintaining our Commitment

As a district, we continue to be committed to Inclusive Education at all levels through

- Frequent review of our policies and practices

- Challenging attitudes and assumptions and valuing diversity in our classrooms

- Ongoing work on developing Response to Instruction and Intervention framework (Working to ensure students have flexible access to required supports)

- Increasing teacher capacity in using pedagogical strategies that meet the needs of diverse learners and help them access curriculum (Universal Design for Learning)

- Continued partnership with SWRCSD and community agencies to support students

- Funding for district and contracted supports