



Before we can talk about things like tiered support, engagement, and student progress, we must ensure we are using multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. ***Universal design for learning*** ensures all students have access to and are engaged in learning, and thus, have a chance at making progress and demonstrating

learned skills. In this blog we will focus on highlighting ***representation***.

***Representation*** are the ways that we demonstrate or model skills. For example, models can include physically doing the skill, sharing a video, reading a story that demonstrates the skill, or a combination of approaches. I am sure it is clear to you by now that I love animals. I love their companionship and each of their unique personalities. My dog, Lily, sat by my side as I wrote my book, *Using Data Based Processes to Create Sustainable Change in Your School and Community*. She often rested her head on my lap or shared her paw almost as though she was cheering me on as I wrote and wrote some more. Although I am quite certain most times it was to remind me that she was ready for her walk, a meal, a fun game of fetch, or her favorite treat, Greenies. I also really love how much animals can teach us. They learn everything they do by watching. Think about how birds learn to fly. Their mother demonstrates flying again and again. Can you imagine a bird learning to navigate their environment from their mom pushing them out of the nest or perhaps worse, watching another species of animal that has different innate abilities or adaptations. To successfully acquire a skill, students need demonstrations and not all demonstrations are equal. Think about a student who is experiencing a visual or hearing impairment. They will need different, accessible forms of demonstration. Think about the students who are most engaged in activities that include movement, videos, or tactile materials. They will find the demonstrations which align to them much more meaningful. By providing multiple means of representation aligned with the students in a classroom we are providing them the best opportunity to observe the skill in meaningful ways. Stay tuned for the next blog on engagement!

